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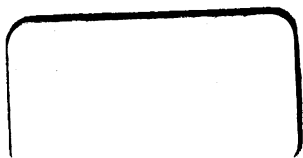
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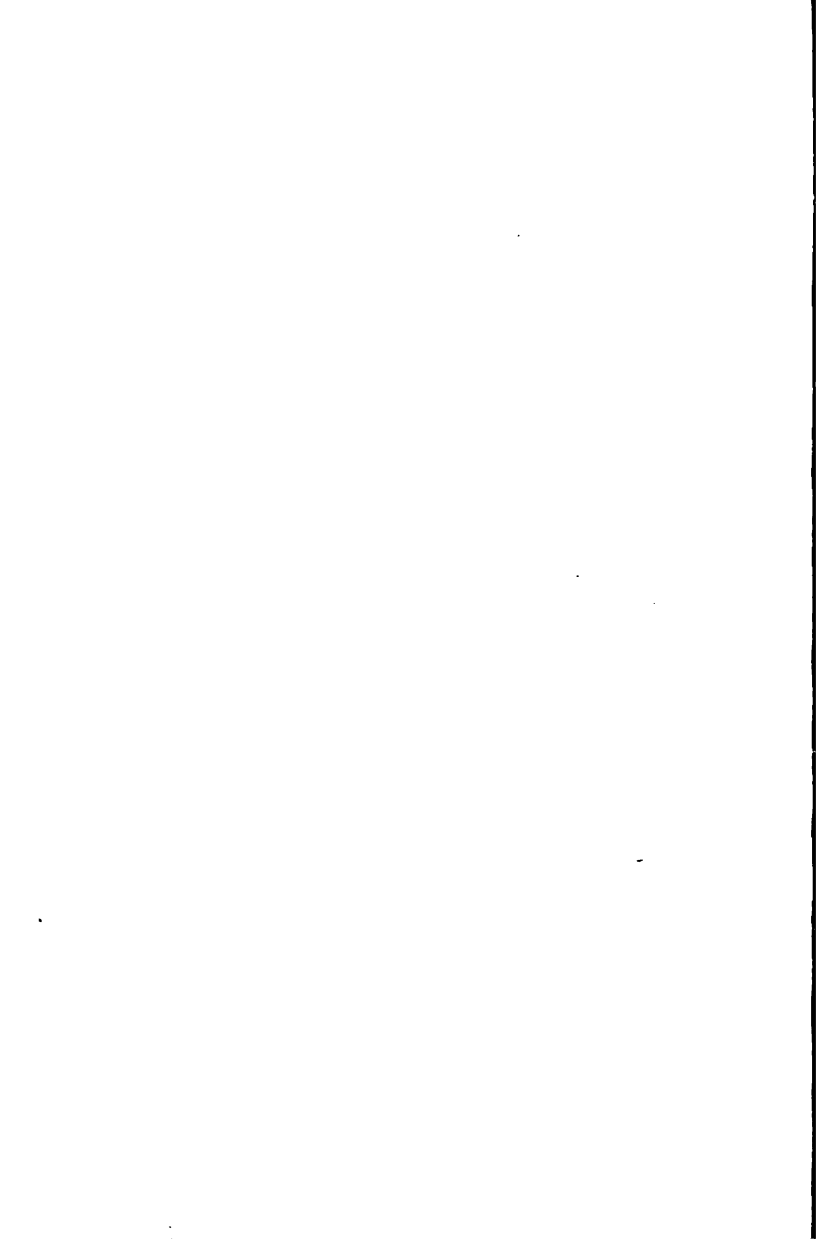
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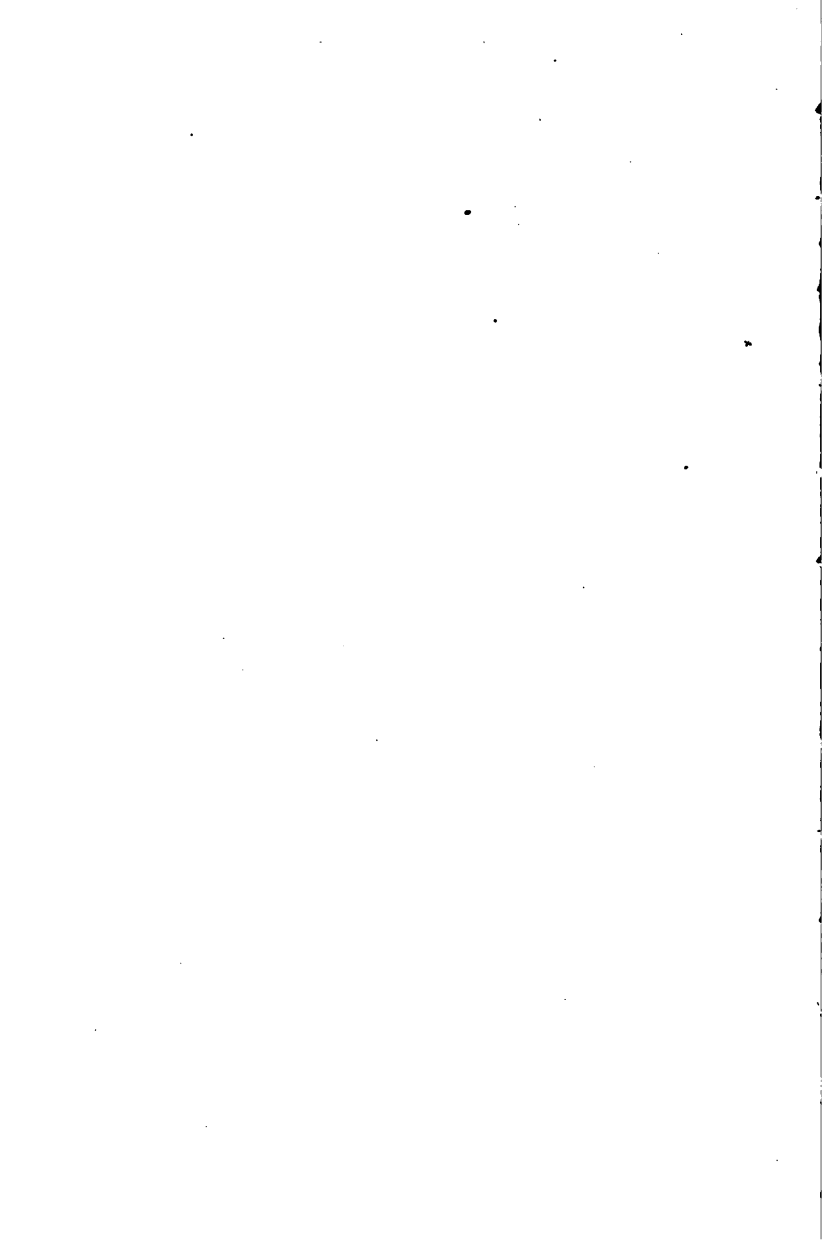






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THE ROMANS LEAVING BRITAIN (see page 51).

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# EARLY ENGLAND

FROM

THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE  
ACCESSION OF HENRY II.

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**HISTORICAL READER No. II.**

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WITH 100 MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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## PREFACE.



HISTORY was long ago defined as "Philosophy teaching by examples," and its study certainly tends not only to instruct the mind but to develop the moral sense. A faithful record of what has been done by our forefathers in England is full of the best lessons for American boys and girls. There is much not only to admire and love but also to suggest noble thoughts and stimulate to noble actions—much to remind us that

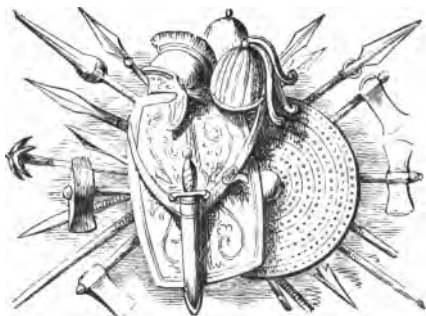
"Not once or twice, in that rough island-story,  
The path of honour was the way to glory."

In this History of "Early England" the aim has been to present clearly and accurately all that children can well understand of the events which led to the making and founding of the nation. That every word-picture be simple and graphic is most desirable, but it is not less important that the information given be reliable and systematic.

Everything that could in any way enhance the educative value of the book has been done. The *text* has been carefully graduated, and the style throughout is pure and vivid. The *notes* will be found useful, not only to the scholar, but also to the younger pupil-teachers, indicating to them the "line of

thought" which they should follow in their oral lessons. The *illustrations* are unusually numerous and attractive, and include an entirely new series of vignettes of sovereigns and other prominent persons. These finely-engraved heads are not mere fancy sketches but, with a few exceptions, are taken from authentic sources and therefore form a valuable series of historical portraits. The *maps* have been specially drawn for the work, and have been most carefully edited.

Some junior teachers may need to be reminded that "geography and chronology are the two eyes of history." Every lesson in history should therefore begin with some drilling in dates, and every place mentioned should be pointed out on the map and briefly described.



BRITISH AND ROMAN WEAPONS.



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ROMAN GALLEYS  
AT  
LONDINIUM



BRITISH COINS



ARCH-DRUID

# I.

## BEFORE THE DAWN.

### LONG, LONG AGO.

LONG, long ago, the name 'England'<sup>1</sup> was quite unknown, and such words as 'English' and 'Welsh'<sup>2</sup> were never heard of. But the country itself was there, though it was not called England; and it is a most interesting study to find out something about its earliest inhabitants—the people who lived here before a single town or road or bridge could anywhere be seen.

We know of three names which have been given

to the country :—(1) *Albion*,<sup>3</sup> or Alban ; (2) *Britain*,<sup>4</sup> the name used by the Romans ; and (3) *England*, the present name, which it has borne for about a thousand years. But long before the words England, Britain, or Albion were used, in the dark ages before the dawn of history,<sup>5</sup> when all the countries of Europe were still in a savage state, the island was the home of a rude and barbarous people.



ESKIMOS WATCHING FOR SEALS.

**The Men of the Caves.**—Have you read about the patient Laplanders,<sup>6</sup> who live with their reindeer in the far north, or the Eskimos,<sup>7</sup> who hunt the seal and walrus in the icy regions of Arctic America ? Strange as it may appear, in England there once dwelt a race of men probably less civilised than these simple people. There are abundant proofs that the earliest inhabitants of the island lived, not in houses or even huts, but in

*caves.* Such cave-dwellings have been found in Devon, Somerset, Denbigh, Yorkshire, and elsewhere.

In the time of these cave-men, the land was one of the wildest imaginable. Inland, where now we see fertile farms and beautiful parks, there were only far-extending trackless forests, dreary moors, wide marshes, morasses, and reedy lakes. The simple cave-men never dared to explore the immense forests, because of the savage animals which then infested them. Amongst these were not only the wolf,<sup>8</sup> the elk,<sup>9</sup> the brown and the grisly bear, but there also were the tiger (larger than those now shot in India), the hyæna, and, in the very earliest times, the rhinoceros and elephant.

At Salisbury alone, the bones of elephant, rhinoceros, hyæna, lion, and reindeer have been found. That the climate was extremely cold when the deposit was made, is proved by the fact that along with these were the remains of the marmot, the lemming, and some egg-shells of the wild goose. The height of the drift, moreover, being from ninety to one hundred feet above the existing Avon, shows what an enormous time has elapsed since the period in question.\*

On the rivers, again, thousands of otters could be seen diving for fish, and beavers building their curious houses, while seals and occasionally whales swam on every coast.

Being no match for the wild animals of the forest, the cave-man was content to live near the sea—his food being chiefly the flesh of the reindeer, such fish as he could kill with the rudest of harpoons and hooks, and oysters and other shell-fish gathered on the shore.

It is remarkable that in some of the caves we find

\* See Reports of Brit. Assoc. for August 1882.

drawings of leaves and animals scratched on bone,<sup>10</sup> some really showing considerable taste; and this is another point of resemblance between these early cave-men and the Eskimos. For shelter in winter, besides the caves, they probably dug holes in the ground, roofing them with turf. In summer, it seems likely that they lived in tents of skins, as some of the Eskimos still do. Their clothes also were made of skins; and doubtless they had canoes covered with the same material.

1. **England**, i.e., 'land of the Angles, or Engles.' See page 66.

2. **Welsh**, the name given by the Saxons to the Britons. The word *weallas* signifies 'foreigner' or 'stranger.' The same term is applied by the modern Germans to the people of Italy and France. The Welsh call themselves *Cymry*.

3. **Albion**, the oldest name of our country. It is a Celtic word, meaning 'white island.' It is akin to the Latin word *albus* and to *Alp*, cf. the Alps. The white cliffs of Kent are clearly seen from the opposite coast of France.

4. **Britain**. The old British name *Prydain* was Latinised into *Britannia*. It is probably derived from the word '*brith*,' i.e., spotted or painted (see page 21). Other derivations are given.

5. **Dawn of history**. The first mention of Britain is made by Herodotus, the father of Greek history, who wrote about 450 B.C. He admits that he knew nothing more

than that it was an island, and that it produced tin.

6. **The Laplanders**, a Mongolian race, inhabit the most northern portion of Europe.

7. **The Eskimos** are also Mongolians, and are akin to the Samoleles of Siberia.

8. The wild boar, bear, and wolf were at this period, and for ages after, common in this country. Macaulay says that wolf-hunting was enumerated among the common sports of Kerry as late as 1719. The savage brood had been finally expelled from the forests of Great Britain during the preceding century. See also page 121.

9. Many remains prove that formerly the elks were very much larger than any species now existing. One skull in the British Museum measures a yard in length, and the span of the horns is 42 inches.

10. Beautifully-coloured drawings of animals are said to be frequently seen on the walls of the caves of the Bushmen—the *cave-men* of South Africa.



PRIMITIVE BRITAIN.



SAVAGES OF THE STONE AGE.

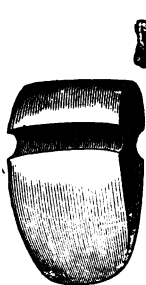
## THE STONE-HATCHET MEN.

**A**FTER many thousands of seals had been killed and millions of shell-fish had been eaten, we find that the cave-men entirely disappeared from the country. The new-comers were small men, but they were superior to the seal-hunters, for they were skilful in making and using stone weapons,<sup>1</sup> especially axes or hatchets and adzes. Their axes were made of a very hard stone, neatly sharpened and sometimes polished, and firmly fastened to a handle of wood.

We find also that they made stone hammers, bone and flint knives, flint chisels and gouges, flint heads for arrows and spears; but the *stone-hatchet* was their principal weapon. With it, they cut down trees—using

the timber for canoes and oars, spades and other implements, handles to spears and harpoons, as well as for building houses.

With so many new weapons, the stone-hatchet man



STONE-HATCHET.



STONE ARROW-HEADS.

could kill animals that the cave-man had no courage to

face. But what was of more importance, he began to be a farmer as well as a hunter, and grew wheat, barley, and millet to make his bread. Many rude hand-mills, with which the women ground the corn, have been discovered in various localities.

Some of the more ingenious among them were able even to weave and knit; and, in our museums,<sup>2</sup> we may see pieces of linen cloth belonging to that early age, as well as distaffs<sup>3</sup> and whorls<sup>4</sup> used by the women in spinning the thread for making the cloth. In their burying-places and houses we also find rude earthenware cups, generally of a black or brown colour. Several of their canoes have been found, some containing stone axes and harpoons. One was dug up near the Firth of Forth, with the skeleton of a whale close beside it.

The strangest thing about the stone-hatchet men is that the tombs which they made for their chiefs and great men were built of such huge heavy stones that everybody wonders how they were raised up and conveyed to the spot. Imagine an immense block, forty feet long, split from some rock, moved for miles across a rough country; and then raised on end to be fixed in a deep hole in the ground, where, for thousands of years,

it has remained upright as you now see it. It is even believed that they erected part, at least, of Stonehenge<sup>5</sup> itself, one of the grandest "rude stone monuments" in the world.

Many of their tombs have been found, some consisting of three large stones placed on edge beside each other, with a flat one on the top covering the whole.<sup>6</sup> When the dead chief or father of a tribe was laid within, his stone-hatchet, several spears, and sometimes a favourite dog or horse, were buried with him. His family and the rest of the tribe heaped earth and stones over the whole so as to form a large mound.

Another curious point about the stone-age men is that, though so much stronger than the cave-men and superior in various ways, they had nothing of the taste or skill in drawing which we find in sketches of the reindeer and elephant left by the seal-hunters.

1. **Stone-weapons** and implements have been found in almost all parts of the world.

2. **Museum.** The first institution of this kind is said to have been founded about B.C. 280, in Alexandria, in Egypt.

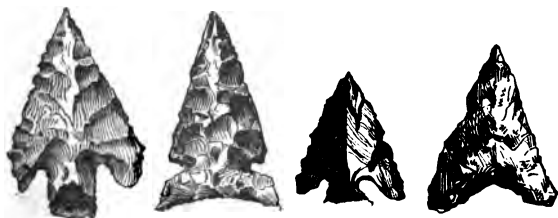
3. **Distaff**, that is, *tow-staff*—the staff to which the bunch of flax or *tow* is tied, and from which the thread is drawn in spinning.

4. **Whorl**, the reel on which the thread is wound.

5. **Stonehenge**, A.S., 'hanging-stones' on Salisbury Plain, in Wilts, consisted of two circles of vast stones. Of the outer ring seventeen are still upright. Within the inner circle,

there is a large flat stone, which is often called the altar. It is usually believed to be the remains of a Druidical temple. Some recent writers assert that it was intended for astronomical purposes. Geoffrey of Monmouth says that Aurelian Ambrosius erected it in memory of the 300 Britons who were massacred here by the Saxons in 450. See page 31.

6. Called *cromlechs*. These are found in different parts of Europe. In our country they are most numerous in Anglesey and other parts of Wales.



FLINT ARROW-HEADS.



## THE BRONZE AGE.

YOU have seen what changes were made by the use of stone-hatchets and other flint implements, but a still greater improvement took place when *bronze*<sup>1</sup> became common. Look at a penny-piece! That is made of bronze—an alloy<sup>2</sup> or mixture of copper and tin<sup>3</sup>—which was most useful to man before he knew how to work iron.

It is a curious fact that when the stone-age men were using their hatchets, there was plenty of tin and copper in this country untouched, because no one had yet shown them how to make bronze. How did the men of those early times become acquainted with this valuable and useful substance?

Those who have read about King Solomon may remember that, when he wished to build a great temple in Jerusalem, he was glad to be assisted by the people of *Tyre*,<sup>4</sup> who were more skilful than the Jews.

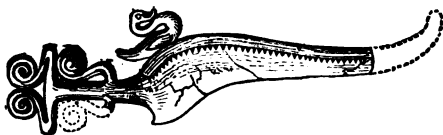
Tyre was a large and wealthy city of *Phœnicia*,<sup>5</sup> a country bordering on Solomon's kingdom, and the Tyrians were then the best craftsmen and most enterprising merchants in the world. They founded a great colony at Carthage,<sup>6</sup> in Africa, and another at Cadiz,<sup>7</sup> in Spain; so that almost all the commerce of Europe was in their hands.

Hearing that there was tin in some islands beyond Spain, the merchants of Tyre and Carthage sailed west, past the Pillars of Hercules,<sup>8</sup> and then turning north along the coast, reached the 'Tin Islands.'<sup>9</sup> Thus the tin from our country went to make bronze for the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the early

Italians, and others; while at the same time it became known to the men of this land.

The people of Tyre used much bronze to decorate their temples and public buildings. In the British Museum <sup>10</sup> there are two handsome gates of bronze which were brought to this country from the ruins of Tyre. These gates are covered with groups of figures, which show how busy and important the city of Tyre was in those early days when Phœnicia was one of the foremost of nations.

Throughout England, innumerable tools, weapons, and ornaments of the bronze age have been found, and good specimens may be seen in almost every museum. Most of the bronze swords are so



BRONZE KNIFE-BLADE.

small that they seem intended for boys, which is a proof that the men of that time were small in size.

Besides those found in graves and houses, large numbers of bronze articles have sometimes been found together in one spot, evidently belonging to some merchant who had brought them for exchange, perhaps from Carthage or Cadiz. Thus, in a peat-bog near Parsonstown in Ireland, there was found in 1848 a collection of nearly a hundred bronze articles, including thirteen trumpets, twenty-nine spear-heads, thirty-one bells, three gouges, and several large vessels.

We cannot say exactly when bronze was first known in Britain, but men of science now conclude that it was used for not less than ten centuries before the introduction of iron.

Some workmen of the bronze age have left us beautiful ornaments in amber, jet, and gold. In a Wiltshire grave was found a bronze dagger, the wooden handle of which is inlaid with thousands of minute gold pins. An amber dagger-pommel from Devon is also beautifully inlaid with gold. On the preceding page, you see a picture of one of their ornamented bronze knife-blades.

It would take long to tell all the changes and improvements which resulted from the use of bronze implements instead of stone ones. The people of the southern parts of the island were no longer mere savages. The arts of spinning and weaving were known; and the dog, ox, sheep, goat, pig and the horse had been domesticated. Corn was grown, and was reaped with bronze sickles. Though unacquainted with the potter's wheel, they could make earthenware vessels of various kinds. Their huts were probably made of interlaced boughs smeared over with mud.

Before the end of the bronze period, the small dark race of whom you have read as stone-hatchet men (sometimes called Iberians<sup>11</sup>) was replaced by quite a different people, more civilised than any that had yet settled in the land. Who were these new-comers?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Bronze</b> is formed of tin and copper in the proportion of about 1 to 10.</li> <li>2. <b>Alloy</b>, a mixture of two or more metals. The word is derived from the Latin <i>ligo</i>, to bind.</li> <li>3. In this country, <i>copper</i> and <i>tin</i> belong chiefly (the latter entirely) to Devon and Cornwall.</li> <li>4. <b>Tyre</b> was also famous for its beautiful cloth, Tyrian purple being a colour which could be worn only by kings and emperors.</li> <li>5. <b>Phœnicia</b> is the Greek name of the country, and means the 'land of the date palm.' The people themselves called it <i>Chana</i>, that is, '<i>Canaan</i>,' the 'low land,' in contradistinction to <i>Aram</i>, the 'high land.'</li> <li>6. <b>Carthage</b> was founded by a Tyrian colony, and soon rose to be the greatest commer-</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cial city of ancient times. The three great 'Punic wars' with the Romans ended in its total destruction by order of the Roman Senate. The ruins of the once great rival of Rome are 10 miles north-east of Tunis.</li> <li>7. <b>Cádiz</b>, now an important port on the south-west coast of Spain, near the mouth of the Guadalquivir. A Phœnician colony settled there about 1100 B.C.</li> <li>8. <b>Pillars of Hercules</b>. The two great promontories on either side of the Straits of Gibraltar, Mounts <i>Calpe</i> and <i>Abyla</i> (now Gibraltar and Spartell), were so called by the Greeks. Their story was that Hercules in his journey westward found his way barred by a huge rock, and that he rent it in twain, allowing the ocean to rush in.</li> <li>9. <b>Tin Islands</b>, first mentioned by Herodotus</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

under the name *Cassiterides*,—now generally believed to be the Scilly Isles, off Land's End.

10. **British Museum**, the grand national collection of antiquities, &c., in London, founded in 1756.

11. **Iberians**. The Latin historian, Tacitus, speaks of a tribe in Wales with swarthy skin and black curly hair, whom he supposed to be a colony from a similar people in Spain called *Iberi*.

## THE COMING OF THE CELTS.



CELTIC CORACLE OR CANOE.

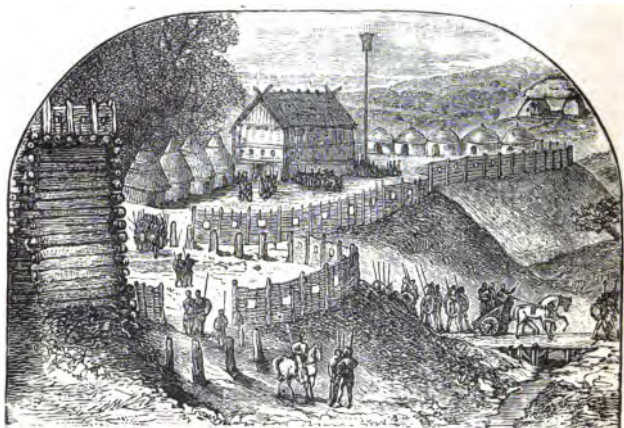
THE new warriors who came pouring over to settle on the island, were the first of the Celtic invaders.

There were four great conquests of the country: first, by the *Celts*, who called it Albion; second, by the *Romans*, who called it Britain; third, by our forefathers, who sailed over from North Germany and called the land England; and fourth, by the *Normans*,<sup>1</sup> who came over from France and defeated the English, but allowed the country to be still called England. To be quite exhaustive, we should add the invasion by the Danes<sup>2</sup>—making in all *five* great conquests.

The first conquest was a double invasion, because there were two Celtic races who came over from the Continent—the second more powerful than the first. The first Celts were taller than the ‘Iberians’ of the bronze age, and had fair complexions and blue eyes. They seem to have called themselves *Albanach*, the men of Albion; and when driven before the stronger race of Celts who came next, many of them sailed westward to

Ireland, and others took refuge in the northern mountains of Scotland.

The second Celts were probably darker in complexion than those whom they supplanted. They belonged to a much larger section of the race, then spread over all the countries in the west of Europe. They called themselves *Cymry*,<sup>3</sup> but those who held this country were generally called *Britons*—a name by which they were known to the Romans.



AN EARLY CELTIC STRONGHOLD.

Now how did those British Celts become masters of the whole country, excepting the great forests that still covered some inland districts? Their knowledge of iron and the working of metals gave them great power over the other islanders. They were not only better warriors, but excelled them in farming, hunting, and fishing; built better houses, ships, and canoes; and began to have so much trade with merchants from the

Continent, that we find money of theirs which was coined by themselves, and used for buying and selling, before the Roman conquest.

If you ask when bronze was first replaced by iron, the only answer is, that iron is thought to have been known in South Britain about four hundred years before the Romans came.

During the time of the Celtic Britons, therefore, we find so great an advance made in industry and commerce that it is quite a mistake to call them 'savages.' They wore trousers, a tunic fastened with a belt, and occasionally a plaid<sup>4</sup> thrown over their shoulders. Some tribes, in the more rugged and woody parts, wore skins of animals—a dress better suited for tracking the wild boar or red deer through the dense forests and pathless moors. In the northern districts, however, there still remained some barbarous tribes, whose warriors, like the South-Sea islanders<sup>5</sup> of the present day, prided themselves on the blue tattoo-marks<sup>6</sup> which had been traced all over their arms, breasts, and faces.

1. Normans, the people of Normandy—Norsemen from the coast of Norway, who under Rollo had invaded France and forced the king to cede one of his northern provinces to them. See page 147.

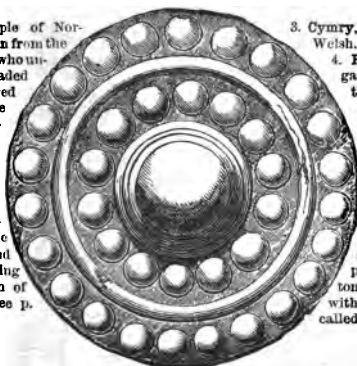
2. Danes, the people of Denmark, who invaded and finally occupied the whole of England east of Watling Street and north of the Thames. See p. 90.

3. Cymry, called by the Saxons Welsh.

4. Plaid, a loose outer garment; still worn by the Scottish Highlanders.

5. South Sea Islands, the vast multitudes of islands scattered throughout the Pacific Ocean.

6. Tattoo-marks, figures made on the skin by stains or punctures. The Britons stained their bodies with the juice of a plant called woad.



A BRITISH SHIELD.

# ROMAN BRITAIN





THE ROMAN EAGLE.

## II. THE BRITON AND THE ROMAN.

### THE COMING OF THE ROMANS.



JULIUS CÆSAR.

WE have seen how the Celts had introduced many improvements into the country, and also how they were strong enough to become masters of the land wherever they went. But a much stronger race of warriors was now about to land—a race which the British Celts could not hope to resist successfully.

The new-comers, now rowing over in their galleys towards the white cliffs of Kent, are *Romans*, the best soldiers in the world; and the man at their head is *Julius Cæsar*,<sup>1</sup> the conqueror of



Gaul—a general so famous that many consider him superior to Alexander the Great<sup>2</sup> or Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>3</sup>

Compared with the huge ‘ transports ’<sup>4</sup> of the present day, the galleys<sup>5</sup> of those days were but poor affairs, for it took more than eighty to carry over the two Roman legions—a small army of about nine or ten thousand men. When, in ready response to the stirring appeal of the standard-bearer of the tenth legion, they leapt into the water, clad in glistening helmet and shining breastplate, one could see, as they formed in companies and drew their sharp and heavy swords, that they had been well drilled for the work of slaughter.

Now why did the British Celts not defeat this little



army? They certainly offered a desperate and well-nigh successful resistance to the landing of the Romans, and stoutly opposed their advance in-

land; but they were broken up into so many tribes, and their chiefs and kings had so many quarrels amongst themselves, that they scarcely ever remained long united. Still the Romans found much more difficulty than they had expected in subduing the ‘ barbarians,’<sup>6</sup> as they called them.

One day, Cæsar ordered a detachment<sup>7</sup> of his soldiers to go to a field which had been discovered at some distance from the camp, and mow the corn which was growing there. When busy cutting the corn, the soldiers were surprised by a large number of British warriors; and all would have been killed had not Cæsar come to their rescue with the rest of the legionaries.<sup>8</sup>

The Romans were greatly dismayed by the strange war-chariots which some of the bravest Celts used. These terrible chariots had long sharp blades projecting from the axle; and, like the rush of a torrent,



ELEPHANT CROSSING THE THAMES.

they swept through the enemy's ranks—their paths marked by lines of dead and wounded.

Cæsar himself tells us of the wonderful skill shown by the British charioteers, dashing swiftly to and fro,

quickly wheeling in any direction, or urging their horses at full speed down a hill or along a precipice. When a chariot had broken through the Roman ranks, one warrior would quickly leap down, sword in hand, and attack the enemy, while the driver turned the horses round and waited a little distance off to assist his companion to escape.

Having lost some of his galleys, and finding it absolutely necessary to employ a larger army, Cæsar only stayed a few days in Britain on his first visit. The following year he returned with five legions, including two thousand horse-soldiers; and as they filled no less than eight hundred galleys, you can imagine the wonder of the Britons in Kent when they saw such a vast fleet sailing towards their coast.

Cæsar fought several battles in Kent, but continued his march inland till he came to the river Thames. The Celtic Britons united their forces under a chief called Casswallon, who was determined to hinder the Roman army from crossing the Thames. Before Cæsar reached the river, the Britons had cut a large number of sharp-pointed oak stakes, and had fixed them in the bed of the river.

That, however, did not stop the Romans. One account of their crossing is, that they had brought an elephant with them from the Continent. When it marched in front of the legions and stepped into the water, the simple Britons were struck with terror; and, as the huge animal, with a tower on his back full of armed men, swam towards them, they took to flight. Cæsar then marched towards the place where St. Albans now is, for there the Britons had a town—that is, a cluster of round huts in the midst of a wood, defended by a deep ditch and a high bank of earth with a strong wooden fence on the top. These defences were soon

forced, and Caswallon was taken prisoner and compelled to accept Cæsar's terms.

Cæsar has given us a description of Britain as it was two thousand years ago—the first written account we have of our country. The people had skill as smiths and carpenters; they wore cloth of their own weaving; they grew corn to sell to merchants from the Continent, and used to store their grain in dry caves and pits. They had herds of cattle, and their active little horses astonished the Romans as they dashed furiously amongst them with the dreaded war-chariot.

The inland parts of Britain and many northern districts were very thinly peopled; but Cæsar himself tells us that in the south "the buildings were exceedingly numerous and the number of people countless."

When Cæsar returned to Rome, he was honoured with a 'triumph'—that is, a grand procession with his army through the principal streets; and, in memory of his two visits to our country, he hung up in one of the great temples at Rome a shield studded with British pearls. But he "did not conquer Britain, he only showed it to the Romans."

1. **Julius Cæsar**, the greatest of the Roman generals, born 100 B.C., first invaded Britain 55 B.C. He had conquered Gaul and also subdued Spain. He was assassinated in the Senate House at Rome, B.C. 44. The portrait at the head of the lesson is from a bust in the British Museum.
2. **Alexander the Great**, the greatest conqueror the world has ever seen. Born B.C. 356. He founded the great Macedonian empire, which extended to Egypt on the south and to India on the east. Though he had conquered so many countries, he was only 33 years of age at his death.
3. **Napoleon Bonaparte**, Emperor of France, the most famous conqueror of modern times. He was born A.D. 1769 in Corsica. After many brilliant victories, he became master of all Europe; but at last suffered three great defeats—first in Russia, second at Leipzig, the great 'battle of

nations,' and third at Waterloo, when all Europe was rising indignantly against him. He ended his days in exile at St. Helena.

4. **Transports**, large vessels used for carrying troops.
5. **Galleys**, low flat-built vessels having sails and oars.
6. **Barbarians**. The Greeks called any people whose language they could not understand, 'barbaroi,' which was simply an imitation (ba-ba, &c.) of the unintelligible sounds which foreigners seemed to make in speaking.
7. **Detachment**, a body of troops detached or separated from the main army for some special service.
8. **Legionaries**, the men of a Roman 'legion.' A legion consisted of infantry, cavalry, and engineers, and numbered from 3000 to 6000 men.



A DRUIDICAL SACRIFICE.

## THE DRUIDS.

THE religion of the Britons, called *Druidism*,<sup>1</sup> was a strong and well-ordered system. Under a supreme ruler, the all-powerful Arch-druid,<sup>2</sup> were numerous Priests, spread over the whole country and arranged in regular bodies or colleges.<sup>3</sup> This order performed the solemn duties of sacrifice and directed the worship of the gods. In addition to these, there were inferior classes of Bards and Prophets,<sup>4</sup> who sang to the harp hymns to the gods and ballads in praise of their heroes and chiefs.

The Druids were not only the priests, but were also the judges and lawgivers of the Britons. They tried all accused of crime, and decided disputes between individuals and tribes. Whoever refused to obey their decisions was excommunicated<sup>5</sup> from society and refused

the protection of the law. So great was their power that they kept the sacred treasure in woods and groves, with "no other guard than the terrors of their religion." Thus, even in those early ages, no man could be "a law unto himself."

These priests and lawgivers were also the men of learning and the teachers of the people. Even from Gaul,<sup>6</sup> all who wished to know the 'mysteries'<sup>7</sup> of Druidism came over to sit at the feet of the British priests. Thousand of verses had to be learned by heart; for it was unlawful to *write* the 'secret things.' It is said that even twenty years were not thought too long to acquire all that the Druids could teach. These verses contained much information about the earth with its animals and plants, the motions of the sun and moon, the countless stars, and the infinite universe.

More important than all, they impressed upon the hearts of the learners the thoughts of the wise concerning the power and rule of the gods. These old Britons worshipped many deities,<sup>8</sup> but especially adored the Sun—the Fire-God, Giver of light and heat. They seem also to have reached a dim idea that all had sprung from *one* Supreme Being, the ruler and judge of the whole world.

The Druids taught that the soul of man was immortal,<sup>9</sup> and that the dead had to answer to the gods for the deeds of the past. Courage, piety, hospitality, honesty, and truthfulness were among the virtues most valued.

If any one had lived a perfect life, they said that he at once passed into the divine land. If the man had been vile and wicked, then the soul was compelled to dwell in a succession of the lowest animals, and suffered great pain and a long period of degradation.<sup>10</sup> If the man

had been good but not perfect, then his soul had to enter but a few animals of the nobler kind before it received forgiveness from the gods.

Such were the teachings of these old British priests. Amid much that was false, can we not see some traces of a yearning after the true and the good?

Cæsar tells us some curious things about the Druids. They used to live in groves of oak, and they so venerated that tree that they never offered up a sacrifice without using some of its leaves. They said that whatever grew upon it was divine; any mistletoe-plant found on it was held to be very sacred, and believed to possess the marvellous power of healing all diseases.

On their New Year's Day,<sup>11</sup> a solemn procession of priests and people was made to any oak-tree on which the holy plant had been seen growing—the priests being clothed in white, and the people following them in silence. When two white bulls had been bound by the horns to the oak, the Arch-druid cut the mistletoe<sup>12</sup> with a golden knife, while another received the sacred plant in his white robe. Then the bulls were sacrificed; and, when all the ceremonies were over, the priests and people feasted together in honour of the great event.

Besides bullocks and sheep, it is certain that the Druids offered up human sacrifices. Cæsar says they believed that the gods could not be conciliated<sup>13</sup> unless the life of one man were offered for another. But that seems to have been done in most countries at one time or another. In the Bible we learn that the Jews did the same thing when they were still partly barbarous; and we know that in many countries the Romans had to put down this custom by law, just as England has had to do in Hindustan.<sup>14</sup>

Who were the victims chosen by the Druids? They

were principally prisoners of war and men who had been condemned to death for some crime. They were put to death in a cruel manner. It is said that a large image was made by plaiting wickerwork or straw, and that the victims were enclosed in it to be burnt as a sacrifice. On great occasions the figure was so broad and deep that cattle and other animals as well as men were all roasted together. One of the Greek writers tells us that instead of burning their victims, the Druids sometimes ordered them to be crucified, and at other times to be shot to death with arrows.

1. **Druidism**, the religion of the Druids. The word *druid* is derived from the Welsh *derwydd*, an oak, and is akin to the Greek word *drus*. Cf. English, *tree*.
2. **Arch-druid**, the chief Druid. *Arch* is from the Greek *archos*, first, chief.
3. **College**, a body or society of men bound together for the promotion of learning or religion.
4. **Prophets**, properly *Vates*. They were the teachers of the people.
5. **Excommunicated**, put out of, driven out from.
6. **Gaul**, the ancient name of France. In speaking of the French people, the phrase 'our *Gallie* neighbours' is still often used.
7. **Mysteries**, secrets revealed only to the

*initiated*, and about which they had to keep *silent*.

8. **Deities**, gods. Latin *deus*, a god.
9. **Immortal**, not mortal, never-dying.
10. **Degradation**, disgrace, debasement.
11. **New Year's day**, then the 10th of March, not the 1st of January. The change from the Old to the New Style was made in 1572, and has been adopted by all European nations except the Russians.
12. **Mistletoe**, a parasitical plant or shrub which grows on various trees, but most frequently on the oak.
13. **Conciliated**, to win the favour of, to pacify.
14. **Hindustan**, or India, the country of the Hindus. One of the customs put down by the English was the *Suttee* or burning of the wife on her husband's funeral pile.



STONEHENGE, GENERALLY BELIEVED TO BE A DRUIDICAL TEMPLE.  
(See note 5, p. 15.)



## CARADOC, THE BRITISH KING.



CARADOC.

**A**FTER Julius Cæsar was dead, *Augustus*<sup>1</sup> became ruler of the Roman Empire. He was the greatest of the emperors ; and in his time, when all the world was at peace, Jesus Christ was born in Judæa. That event marked the beginning of the Christian era.<sup>2</sup>

In A.D.<sup>3</sup> 43, after nearly a hundred years' absence, the Romans again invaded

Britain. They were led by *Aulus Plautius*, who had been sent by the Emperor *Claudius*.<sup>4</sup> He pushed on to the Thames, and was there joined by the Emperor. Together they crossed the river and took *Camulodunum*,<sup>5</sup> where they founded a Roman colony—the first in Britain.

The Emperor then returned to Rome and received a 'triumph.' His generals had still much fighting with the Britons ; but, in a few years, the Roman legionaries and their eagles were to be seen, not only south of the Thames, but along the east coast as far north as the Humber, and even in the Severn valley on the west.

In the country now called Wales, however, there was a British chief called *Caradoc*,<sup>6</sup> who led his patriotic band with such bravery, that he might well be compared to William Wallace<sup>7</sup> or William Tell. So resolutely did Caradoc and his men defend themselves in that land

of mountains, that the Roman legionaries took eight years to subdue them.

In Shropshire, the memory of his name still remains; for the scene of his last battle against the invader—a hill where he had an entrenched fort—is called to this day *Caer-Caradoc* or Caradoc's Castle. Here, as elsewhere, British valour could not withstand Roman skill and discipline. Caradoc fled to his stepmother, *Cartismandua*, Queen of the Brigantes,<sup>8</sup> by whom he



CLAUDIUS IN BRITAIN.

was basely betrayed into the hands of his enemies. The Romans spared his life in order that he might be shown to the Emperor at Rome.

So the brave Caradoc was taken through Gaul to Italy, and when the day came for the 'triumph,' he was led in the procession through the streets of Rome—then the richest and grandest city in the world.

"Though through the crowded streets of Rome.

With slow and steady tread,

(H. 2.)

C

Far from his own loved island home,  
That day in triumph led —  
Unbowed his head, unbent his knee,  
Undimmed his eye, his aspect free."

As the captives gazed on the marble pillars, the beautiful arches and statues, and the lofty temples and palaces, Caradoc said it was very strange that the Romans, living amid such splendour, should envy the poor huts of the Britons. When brought before the Emperor Claudius, he showed no trace of fear, no desire for mercy.

"And now he stood with brow serene,  
Where slaves might prostrate fall,  
Bearing a Briton's manly mien  
In Cæsar's palace-hall;  
Claiming, with kindled brow and cheek,  
The liberty, even there, to speak."

While his friends and family knelt and prayed for pity, he stood so calm and silent, and yet so like a king, that Claudius and the Empress were struck with admiration. He looked steadfastly at the Emperor; and, in reply to some questions, spoke in manly and noble tones, as if untouched by misfortune and undaunted by the fear of death.

"Think not, thou eagle lord of Rome,  
And master of the world,  
Though victory's banner o'er thy dome  
In triumph be unfurled,  
I would address thee as thy slave,  
But as the bold should greet the brave."

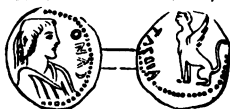
His dignified bearing saved his life. With a sudden

impulse of generosity, Claudius instantly ordered Caradoc and his family to be set free. This was a noble action of the great Emperor.

“The conqueror was the captive then,—  
He bade the slave be free again.”<sup>9</sup>

1. **Augustus** became emperor B.C. 27, and reigned for forty-one years. Although Julius Cæsar was not made emperor, Augustus and all his successors took the name of Cæsar after him. The Germans call their emperor *Kaiser*, and the Russians call theirs *Tsar* or *Csar*, both titles being modifications of the word ‘Cæsar.’
2. **Christian era**, the period dating from the birth of Christ. It was not generally adopted in England until the eighth century.
3. **A.D.**, i.e., *Anno Domini*, in the year of our Lord.
4. **Claudius** reigned from A.D. 41 to 54. On his return from Britain he assumed the surname of *Britannicus*.
5. **Camulodunum** (now Colchester), the capital of the *Trinobantes*.
6. **Caradoc** (Latinised form, *Caractacus*) was the son of *Cunobelin* or *Cymbeline*, king of the *Trinobantes*. The name *Cunobelin* or *Cymbeline* can still be seen on some coins which were struck in his time. King *Cymbeline* is also to be remembered

because Shakespeare wrote a drama upon him and his beautiful daughter *Imogene*. *Caractacus* succeeded his father, but after



COIN OF CUNOBELIN.

- the capture of his capital, *Camulodunum*, he retreated to Wales, and became king of the *Silures*.
7. **Wallace**, the national hero of Scotland, as **Tell** was of Switzerland. Wallace was ‘the first to assert freedom as a national birth-right. His discovery of the military value of the stout peasant footman gave a death-blow to feudalism, and changed in the end the face of Europe.’—*J. R. Green*.
  8. **Brigantes**, a British tribe who occupied the country north of the Humber.
  9. The poetical extracts are taken from *Bernard Barton’s* poem, ‘*Caractacus*.’



ROMAN SOLDIERS ON THE MARCH.

## BOADICEA, THE BRITISH QUEEN.



AFTER Caradoc was taken to Rome, other warlike tribes stoutly opposed the legions wherever they went. The emperor who succeeded Claudius was the wicked Nero,<sup>1</sup> the most cruel and tyrannical of all the emperors. In his time, Britain was governed by *Suetonius Paulinus*, who, after two years' severe fighting, was convinced that the Romans could never rule

the country unless the Druids were exterminated.

The headquarters of Druidism were in the island now called Anglesey. As it took several weeks for the Roman legions to march thither from Colchester and London, some of the more daring of the Britons resolved to attack the Roman towns and kill all who were left behind.

Several bands soon gathered on both sides of the Thames, eager to take revenge upon their harsh taskmasters; and who was at their head? Was it some stern warrior like Caswallon who fought against Cæsar, or Caradoc who was carried to Rome in chains? No, it was a woman—the brave *Boadicea*, Queen of the Iceni.<sup>2</sup> She had been cruelly treated by the Romans, and no one can wonder that she wished to see every legion cut to pieces or hurled back into the sea.

Marching to *Colchester*, the Britons not only laid it

waste with fire and sword, but slaughtered a whole legion which came to relieve the garrison. They then took and destroyed *Londinium*,<sup>3</sup> and soon after the important Roman town of *Verulamium*,<sup>4</sup> killing all the inhabitants. So dreadful was their revenge, that wherever they went they made no prisoners and gave no quarter.

By this time Suetonius had returned from the slaughter of the Druids in Wales, and was only waiting for fresh troops. When he had gathered about ten thousand men, he at once attacked the large British army.

Boadicea rode along the British ranks and fiercely urged her warriors to crush their cruel rulers and to regain their liberty. One writer says she was of commanding stature and appearance, and wore her long yellow hair streaming down over her shoulders; another describes her dress as a many-coloured tunic fastened round the waist by a chain of gold, with a long mantle over it.

But all the eloquence of Boadicea and her soldiers' bravery were in vain. Such an army was no match for the drilled legions of Rome. So terrible was the defeat of the Britons that, in despair, Boadicea took poison to avoid being made captive. It is possible that she may have done so from fear of being carried to Rome to be led through the streets as a captive queen. Queen Cleopatra<sup>5</sup> of Egypt had already poisoned herself to avoid that fate; and long afterwards we know that Zenobia,<sup>6</sup> a queen of Syria, was brought to Rome to be shown in triumph.

After this great rising of the Britons, the Romans placed Druidism under a ban. Although trodden down, its influence worked in the hearts of the people. Much of the old power of the priests was now given to the bards and prophets, who were so long honoured by the Welsh.

We can picture to ourselves a group of Britons in some dim forest glade, gathered round an aged singer, and listening to thrilling legend, solemn hymn, and heart-stirring ballad. Such meetings would no doubt terminate with a trembling repetition of the old Druidical



A BRITISH BARD.

proceedings at the oak or round the sacred fire. Traces of the old British worship even yet remain in the festivities of May-day,<sup>7</sup> the fires of Midsummer Eve,<sup>8</sup> the sports at Halloween,<sup>9</sup> and the use of the mistletoe at Christmas.

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|--|---|
| <p>1. <b>Nero</b> reigned from A.D. 64 to 69. He set fire to Rome, for which he blamed and persecuted the Christians. Paul was executed by his orders.</p> <p>2. <b>Icenæ</b>, a British tribe who occupied Norfolk and the Fen district. <i>Venta Icenorum</i> was their capital. See map, p. 22.</p> <p>3. <b>Londinium</b>, London.</p> <p>4. <b>Verulamium</b>, St. Albans.</p> <p>5. <b>Cleopatra</b> was made queen of Egypt by Julius Cæsar, when he took Alexandria. She poisoned herself, so the story runs, by holding an asp to her breast.</p> | <p>6. <b>Zenobia</b>, the noble queen of Palmyra or Baalbec. After the capture of their queen, the citizens slaughtered the Roman garrison; upon which the emperor ordered the destruction of the city. Its splendid ruins, mostly of white marble, cover an area larger than Rome.</p> <p>7. <b>May-day</b>. The Druids used to light large bonfires before the dawn of the 1st of May to celebrate the return of summer.</p> <p>8. <b>Midsummer-eve</b>, the 25th of June.</p> <p>9. <b>Halloween</b>, the 30th of October.</p> |
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## BOADICEA.

WHEN the British warrior queen,  
Bleeding from the Roman rods,<sup>1</sup>  
Sought, with an indignant mien,<sup>2</sup>  
Counsel of her country's Gods,

Sage<sup>3</sup> beneath the spreading oak,  
Sat the Druid, hoary chief ;  
Every burning word he spoke,  
Full of rage, and full of grief.

“ Princess ! if our agèd eyes  
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,  
'Tis because resentment ties  
All the terrors of our tongues.

“ Rome shall perish ! write that word  
In the blood that she has spilt ;  
Perish, hopeless and abhorred,  
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

“ Rome, for empire far renowned,  
Tramples on a thousand states ;<sup>4</sup>  
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—  
Hark ! the Goth<sup>5</sup> is at her gates !

“ Other Romans shall arise,  
Heedless of a soldier's name ;  
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,  
Harmony<sup>6</sup> the path to fame.

“ Then the progeny that springs  
From the forests of our land,  
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,  
Shall a wider world command.<sup>7</sup>



"Regions Cæsar never knew  
 Thy posterity shall sway,<sup>6</sup>  
 Where his eagles never flew,  
 None invincible as they."

Such the bard's prophetic words,  
 Pregnant with celestial fire,  
 Bending as he swept the chords  
 Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,  
 Felt them in her bosom glow;  
 Rushed to battle, fought, and died;  
 Dying, hurled them at the foe.

"Ruffians, pitiless as proud,  
 Heaven awards the vengeance due;  
 Empire is on us bestowed,  
 Shame and ruin wait for you."<sup>9</sup>

COWPER.

1. The husband of Boadicea, king of the Iceni, had left half of his territory to the Romans, and the other half to his two daughters. The insatiable conquerors, however, seized the whole. When Boadicea bravely claimed justice for her daughters, she was publicly scourged.
2. *Mien*, aspect or countenance.
3. *Sage*, wise.
4. The Roman Empire now included four great divisions or *prefectures*, (1) Italy, (2) Macedonia and adjoining countries, (3) the western part of Asia and northern part of Africa, and (4) Gaul, which also included Britain and Spain.
5. *Goths*. In 395 Alaric, the great chief of the *Visi-Goths*, overran Greece. In 403 he invaded Italy, and a few years later, took and sacked Rome itself.
6. Some of the greatest singers and composers were Italians.
7. Cowper puts in the mouth of the Druid a reference to the future greatness of the English navy.
8. A poetic allusion to Britain's vast colonial possessions.
9. By the year 476 the whole of the Western Empire had been overrun by countless hordes of Goths and Vandals. In that year a Gothic chief became king of Italy. Nearly a thousand years afterwards (in 1453), the capture of Constantinople by the Turks swept away the last vestige of the once invincible Roman Empire.



## THE COMPLETION OF THE ROMAN CONQUEST.



AGRICOLA.

THE Roman general who really made a durable conquest in Britain was *Julius Agricola*, governor of the island from 78 to 84. He was great both as a leader in war and as a ruler in peace. He thoroughly subdued the southern part of the island, and drove to the northward the fiercer spirits who would never submit to a foreign yoke.

Leading his army into the forests and mountains of *Caledonia*,<sup>1</sup> he was victorious in every encounter. The decisive battle was fought at a place which the historian calls *Mons Grampius*, and which is supposed to have been on the southern slope of the Grampians,<sup>2</sup> in the south of Perthshire. Here Agricola gained a complete victory over thirty thousand Caledonians. Their leader, *Galgacus*, was slain on the field.

In that battle, the North Britons used war-chariots like those of the South Britons; and their broadswords and small round shields seem to have been like those used so long afterwards by the Scottish Highlanders.

Agricola proved that Great Britain is an island, for his ships sailed as far north as the Orkneys,<sup>3</sup> and then southwards along the west coast till they turned Land's

End. The Romans, however, did not know much about geography. When some of Agricola's sailors reached Rome, they reported that at the Orkneys they had seen Thulë<sup>4</sup> hid in eternal snow, and that the sea there was a sluggish stagnant mass, which would scarcely yield to the stroke of the oar, and was never agitated by winds or storms!

To keep back the defeated but unsubdued Caledonians, who, from their mountain fastnesses, made frequent inroads into the Roman territory, Agricola built two strong earthen ramparts—one between the Tyne and the Solway Firth, the other from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde. These walls were ten feet high, and had in front of them a ditch ten feet deep and fifteen feet broad. At regular intervals were strong camps and forts, connected by excellent roads.

During seven years of almost constant warfare, Agricola did not neglect the more peaceful duties of the statesman. By his mildness and courtesy, he won the hearts of the Britons. He set up courts of law, governed with justice, and put an end to the tyranny of the Roman tax-gatherers. He also provided for the education of the sons of the chiefs, and encouraged the Britons to plead their cases before him. Those who, before he came, had despised the Roman language, were now ambitious to become eloquent; Roman books were eagerly read, and the Roman toga was worn by many.

This wise ruler also introduced the comforts of civilised life. Roman dwellings, luxurious baths, beautiful theatres, spacious amphitheatres<sup>5</sup> and splendid temples made even servitude pleasant. In this way, the Britons of the South became contented with their chains and patient in slavery.

The noble Agricola was recalled to Rome by the Emperor, who was jealous of his victories as a general and his fame as a governor. A triumph was decreed by the Roman senate, but Agricola never received the honour, and spent the rest of his life in retirement and tranquillity.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <i>Caledonia</i>, the Latinised form of the Celtic name for Britain north of the Forth and Clyde. The native name was <i>Albyn</i>, by which name it is still called by the Highlanders.</p> <p>2. <i>Grampians</i>, a range of lofty mountains stretching across Scotland from Aberdeen to Argyle.</p> <p>3. <i>Orkneys</i>, the 'islands of whales,' from <i>orca</i>, a whale, and <i>inns</i>, and <i>ey</i>—the former of which is the Celtic, and the latter the Norse term for 'island.' They lie to the north of Scotland, and are divided from it by the boisterous Pentland Firth.</p> | <p>4. <i>Thule</i>. The Romans used the phrase '<i>Ultima Thule</i>' to denote the most northerly land they knew. Some think that the term referred to Iceland, others to the Farø Islands. In our text it denotes the Orkneys.</p> <p>5. <i>Amphitheatre</i>, a theatre of circular form, with rows of seats all round. In them were performed the sports in which the Romans delighted, combats between gladiators and wild beasts, &amp;c. The most famous amphitheatre was that known as the Coliseum in Rome; it was built by Vespasian and his son Titus.</p> |
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## THE COMPLETION OF THE ROMAN CONQUEST—continued.

**A**FTER the departure of Agricola, the work he had begun was for some time steadily carried on. Numerous towns<sup>1</sup> were built in various parts of the province. All of these had a certain degree of self-government, and the chief of them were models of Rome itself—the citizens had all the rights of Romans, and were free to make their own laws. Among these free towns were *London*, *St. Albans*, *Colchester*, *Cambridge*, *Lincoln*, and *York* in the east; *Bath*, *Gloucester*, and *Chester* in the west. Splendid roads, aqueducts,<sup>2</sup> and public works of all kinds were constructed throughout the country.

Gradually, however, the incursions of the Caledonians became more and more frequent. The walls of Agricola formed an insufficient protection against these fiery foes.



CALEDONIANS WATCHING THE ROMANS.

Accordingly, the Emperor *Hadrian*<sup>s</sup> visited Britain, and threw up a wall from the Tyne to the Solway. This was parallel to Agricola's earthwork, and exactly like it. The two together formed a strong double rampart. Nineteen years later, in the reign of *Antonine*, the Roman general, *Lollius Urbicus*, built a similar earthwork to strengthen Agricola's second line from the Forth to the Clyde.



ROMAN SOLDIERS

Still the fierce mountaineers of the north broke over these defences again and again. Sometimes the Romans drove them back; at other times indolent governors were glad to purchase peace from the hardy hill-men. At last the Emperor *Severus*, who had formerly been a governor of Britain, resolved to subdue them completely. He made great preparations; but the moment he crossed the wall of Hadrian he was confronted with terrible dangers and difficulties. So great was the labour of making roads and building bridges, cutting down forests, draining marshes and throwing causeways across them, that fifty thousand Romans are said to have perished.

On his return from Caledonia, the old Emperor built a very strong wall of stone across the island from Newcastle to Carlisle. It was twelve feet high and sixty miles long, and so solid and well built that much of it remains to this day. Along the wall were military stations or camps, connected by a line of over eighty forts and three hundred and thirty watch-towers.

Before this great rampart and its forts were quite finished, the stern Severus heard that the Caledonians had again risen up against the Romans. He hurried north, with a terrible vow that he would clear every tribe and man of them from off the face of the earth ;



but on reaching the Roman town of *Eboracum*,<sup>4</sup> which was then the capital of the north, old age and illness overcame the iron-willed Roman, and he died there.<sup>5</sup>

Severus' son and successor, anxious to return to Rome, made peace with the Caledonians, and formally gave up to them the whole country north of his father's wall. After this, no attempt was made to penetrate North Britain, and thus the career of Roman conquest was brought to a close.

1. **The Roman towns** in Britain were of four classes, (1) *Municipia*, which were native towns received into the empire, with the full privileges of Roman cities ; (2) *Coloniae*, or towns settled by retired veterans and other Roman colonists. The other two classes were of less importance, and the inhabitants had not the full rights of Roman citizens.

2. **Aqueducts**, channels for conveying water from one place to another. We now use pipes, but the Romans erected splendid structures bridging the valleys.

3. **Hadrian**, emperor from A.D. 117 to 138.

4. **Eboracum**, now York, one of the two 'municipia' in Britain. The other was *Verulamium*, now St. Albans.

5. **Severus** died in the year 211.



## A PIRATE WEARS THE PURPLE.



CARAUSIUS.

WHEN the Romans ruled Britain, they had much trouble with hordes of savage pirates, generally known as Saxons.<sup>1</sup> These hardy searovers came across the German Ocean, and were, in fact, the forerunners of the Saxons, Angles, and Danes, who afterwards became masters of the whole country, as we shall read presently.

To put down those early pirates, the Romans equipped a great fleet, giving the chief command to an officer styled the 'Count of the Saxon Shore.' Some think that the name 'Saxon Shore' meant not only a coast attacked by the Saxons, but a region already peopled by them. If this be true, the Saxon invasion and occupation began long before the Romans left the island.

The first 'Count of the Saxon Shore' was a daring and skilful sailor called *Carausius*. It is said he had been a pirate himself; but however that may be, he not only defeated all the German freebooters and enriched himself and his seamen with much plunder, but became so powerful that orders were sent from Rome to put him to death. But so popular had Carausius become by his daring and success, that the legions in Britain flocked round him and hailed him as emperor.

Thus it was that a man of unknown birth came to



wear in Britain the imperial diadem<sup>2</sup> and purple robe!<sup>3</sup> He compelled the Roman emperors to grant him the sole government of Britain with the adjacent coast of Gaul, and to acknowledge his title of emperor.

His reign ought to be remembered were it only for the navy that he built. Under him, for the first time, this country was mistress of all the North Sea and the Channel, as she was afterwards to become under Alfred the Great<sup>4</sup> in early English times, under Blake<sup>5</sup> in Puritan times, and under Nelson<sup>6</sup> in modern times. The ships of Carausius were manned by pirates, with whom he had formerly fought.

In our museums, we have many coins of gold, silver, and bronze, which were struck by Carausius,<sup>7</sup> the pirate-emperor, and some of them show that he was a man of commanding presence. He reigned for seven years, and was then assassinated at York by *Allectus*, who himself then became emperor of Britain. But three years later he was defeated and slain by *Constantius*, the father of *Constantine the Great*. Thus Britain once more became a province of Rome.

1. *Saxon*, said to be derived from *seaxe*, a short sword. It denoted a league of kindred tribes living between the mouth of the Rhine and Jutland.

2. *Diadem*, a head-band or fillet worn by the emperors. The word is often loosely used for a crown.

3. *Purple robe*. The use of the purple dye for the *toga*, or Roman mantle, was restricted to the emperor and his household.

4. *Alfred the Great*, see page 95.

5. *Blake*. In the time of Cromwell, Blake, one of the greatest of English admirals, repeatedly defeated the Dutch, and thus gained for England the mastery of the sea.

6. *Nelson*, the greatest of English admirals. By his splendid victories he finally established England's supremacy at sea. He was mortally wounded in the victorious battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

7. *Carausius* was emperor of Britain from A.D. 289 to 297.



## LAST CENTURY OF ROMAN RULE.



CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

**C**ARAUSIUS was emperor in Britain only, but we now turn to a much greater man who ruled the mighty Roman Empire, and through whom most of Europe became Christian. So many countries did *Constantine* govern, that he thought Rome was too far west to be the capital of his empire; he therefore built a splendid town near the Black Sea, and called it *Constantinople*,<sup>1</sup> after his own name.

Constantine<sup>2</sup> ought to be named in every history of our country, because it was at York, where his father died, that he was first hailed as Roman emperor; and also because we are told that he was born in Britain, and that his mother, Helen, was of British blood.

After the great Constantine became a Christian, all the emperors who followed him, except one, were also Christians. But Christianity had been introduced into Britain before the time of Constantine. A distinguished father of the Church,<sup>3</sup> writing in the time of the Emperor Severus, says that even those places in Britain which had defied the Roman arms had yielded to the gentle gospel of Christ. As early as the year 304, Celtic Christians had to suffer cruel persecution, and the first British martyr<sup>4</sup> died rather than deny the faith of Jesus.

Afterwards we shall find that Christianity was brought over from Rome to the *Saxons*; but it is very interesting to know that, long before that time, the gospel had been received not only by the civilised Britons in the south, but by the ruder tribes of the north.

After the death of Constantine the Great, the Roman Empire became weak, especially in the west of Europe; and the Britons began to be much troubled both by the Caledonians from the north and by Saxon pirates from the south and east.

The Caledonians were now called *Picts* and *Attavots*,<sup>5</sup> and generally brought with them some of the *Scots*, an Irish race as savage and terrible as themselves. The great Roman wall was of little use when so many of the legions had been withdrawn; and, in the year 367, the Picts and Scots not only came as far south as London, but pillaged and burnt it, carrying off the citizens as slaves.

Although this invasion was driven back and the wall of Severus repaired, the unhappy Britons were never allowed to enjoy any rest. At last, in 382, the Roman general, *Maximus* (said to be of British descent), assumed the title of emperor, and seized the western provinces of the empire. So many thousands of the Celtic youth were enrolled in his legions that the country was left quite undefended, and the Picts and Scots ruthlessly plundered the miserable and effeminate people of the south.

The Roman Empire decayed still more and more, and the legions were recalled from Britain and other provinces to defend Italy against the fierce Goths<sup>6</sup> and other barbarians now pouring in from the north.

At last Rome itself was sacked, and the Emperor

*Honorius* recalled all the Roman soldiers then left in Britain. In the year 411, he formally released the Britons from their allegiance; but, seven years later, he sent over a legion to aid the Britons once more against their cruel northern foes.

Finally, in the year 426, the Emperor *Valentinian III.* withdrew all the troops, and the Britons were then left to fight for themselves. The struggle was hopeless. The Picts had been for some time in close alliance with kindred tribes from Ireland who were called Scots; to these were now added the pirates of the German Ocean known as "Saxons."

The civilised Britons were quite unable to struggle against enemies so warlike and so strong. A most pathetic picture of the nation's suffering is presented in a sorrowful letter, called the "Groans of the Britons,"<sup>7</sup> which was sent to Rome twenty years after the legions had departed for ever. This removal of the Roman legionaries was an important step towards the greatest event in our history—the change of BRITAIN into ENGLAND.<sup>8</sup>

1. **Constantinople**, the city of Constantine, now the capital of the Turkish Empire. It stands at the southern entrance of a narrow channel leading from the Sea of Marmora to the Black Sea. It was made the capital of the Roman Empire by Constantine in 330, and fell into the hands of the Turks in 1453.

2. **Constantine** was sole emperor, 324 to 337.

3. **Tertullian**.

4. **First British martyr, Alban**, who was put to death in 304 by the Romans, during the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian. The Roman town of Verulamium was re-named St. Albans after him.

5. **Picts and Attacots**. The Picts were the native Gaelic race of North Britain. The Scots were a kindred tribe from Ireland who settled in the valley of the Clyde. It is a moot point who the Attacots were; the word seems to have the same meaning as 'Briton,' that is, spotted, stained, or painted. Some think it was applied to the mixed race living near the Roman walls.

6. **Goths**. At this time the Goths occupied the centre and north-east of Europe. They were divided into two great branches—the eastern branch called the *Austro-Goths* and the western the *Visi-Goths*. See note 5, page 40.

7. **'The Groans of the Britons.'** The following is a translation of part of the letter as given by Gildas—"To Ætius, Thrice Consul. The Groans of the Britons:—The Barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea drives us back to the Barbarians; so that between the two we must be either slaughtered or drowned." He tells us that the British nation was cut up by the Picts and Scots like sheep by butchers, and that the country became the residence of wild animals. His account seems to be exaggerated: the Britons really armed themselves, and made as brave a defence as they could.

8. **Macaulay** says that of the western provinces that obeyed the Cæsars, Britain was the last that was conquered, and the first that was thrown away.

# ROUTES OF GERMANIC INVADERS



Jutes..... Saxons..... Angles.....

### *III. HOW BRITAIN BECAME ENGLAND.*

#### **THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.**

**A**FTER four centuries of Roman rule, the inhabitants of Britain still remained Celtic, both in race and in language. The nation was thus the same, but its spirit was changed. The valour of the early Celts had declined under the imperious rule of the Romans; and the Britons, accustomed to look to their conquerors for protection, had no thought of self-defence. Thousands of British youth were indeed trained to arms, but only to be drafted off to fight the enemies of the empire in distant lands. While the veterans of Rome remained in camp and garrison from the Thames to the Tyne, the Britons dwelt secure, unconscious of their helplessness—the moment the legionaries were withdrawn, the country was defenceless, and seemed to invite invasion.

We have already spoken of the coming of the Celts, and their subjection by the Romans. The time had now come when a Gothic or Germanic<sup>1</sup> race was to seize the greater part of the country. These new-comers were the true forefathers of the English people, their language was the parent of our present tongue, and their home gave its name to the country.

Who were these “English” invaders? Where was the true “Old England?”

These early English were the bold and hardy pirates of the German Ocean. Tall, strong-limbed, fair-haired

and blue-eyed, they vied with each other in fierceness, cruelty, and daring. Three tribes dwelling between the North Sea and the Baltic—the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles—sent forth these savage sea-rovers. The *Jutes* occupied the peninsula of Jutland ;<sup>2</sup> the *Angles* lived farther south, in a district still called Angeln<sup>3</sup> or Engeln ; the *Saxons* came from the coast between the Elbe<sup>4</sup> and the Weser.<sup>5</sup> Our old English forefathers came, therefore, from the land between the Elbe and the Skager-rack ;<sup>6</sup> and it is there that we must look for the birthplace of our language, the cradle of our liberties, and the early home of our race.

To the Britons and Romans all these marauders were known as *Saxons*. Savage and ignorant as they were, they had always been *freemen*, they had never yielded to the Roman yoke. On land, each man tilled his own plot, and had a voice in the government of his tribe. They obeyed chosen chiefs, but had no king. Roman writers dwell especially on their respect for women and love for their families and kindred.

At sea, they were fierce rovers, intent on slaughter and plunder, regardless of storm or tempest. At first they had small flat-bottomed boats, fit only for creeping from point to point along the coast. Before the Romans left, they scoured the sea in large galleys and swept along the shores of Britain and Gaul, spreading terror and destruction wherever they appeared.

They used steel swords, spears, and battle-axes ; but their favourite weapon was a heavy iron club or mace. No wonder they were the dread of every coast. A Roman poet says, " Fierce and cunning, the sea is their school of war and the storm their friend ; they are sea-wolves that live by plunder."

Such were the people who began to pour into the country after the Romans left.

1. **Gothic or Germanic**, also called *Teutonic* : the Teutonic race is now spread over the middle, north-western, and some of the western countries of Europe, and forms the predominant people in Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Great Britain.
2. **Jutland**, the only European peninsula that extends northwards.
3. **Angeln**, in the province of Schleswig-Holstein, between Flensburg and the Schlei Fiord. The Continental language which

most resembles our own is the Frisian :  
'Good butter and good cheese  
Is good English and good Friese.'

4. The **Elbe** rises in Bohemia and flows through the middle of Germany into the North Sea. Sixty miles above its mouth is the famous port of Hamburg, the great emporium of the foreign trade of Germany.
5. The **Weser** drains the district between the Elbe and the Rhine, and enters the North Sea forty miles above Bremen.
6. **Skager-Rack**, between Jutland and Norway.

## THE JUTES.

**WE** shall first tell of the coming of the Jutes. The Britons, you will remember, were unable to cope with their enemies—Picts, Scots, and "Saxon" pirates.

The British king, *Vortigern*, thought it would be a wise plan to employ the sea-warriors against his other foes. He therefore asked two Jutish leaders, *Hengist*<sup>1</sup> and *Horsa*,<sup>2</sup> to help him in driving back his northern enemies. They agreed, and came over with three ships, carrying (it is said) 1600 men.

The first landing-place was in the *Isle of Thanet*, which was at that time separated from the rest of Britain by a wide channel. Guarding the passage, was the great Roman castle of *Richborough*,<sup>3</sup> the ruins of which still form one of the grandest monuments in Britain.

The Britons and their new auxiliaries at once marched against the Picts and Scots, who were unable to resist the valour of the Jutes and were driven back to the north. Vortigern and his people congratulated themselves on having secured the help of so warlike a race,



and rewarded the service of their allies with a gift of the Isle of Thanet.<sup>4</sup>

So easy had been the victory, and so pleasant was the new home of the Jutes, that their brethren on the



THE STANDARD OF THE WHITE HORSE, THE JUTISH ENSIGN.

Continent hurried over to join them. One writer says that five thousand men came in seventeen ships. Thanet was too small to hold so many warriors; and, having no fear of the Britons, they determined to seek a quarrel.

They soon found an excuse ; and, declaring war, they crossed the Medway,<sup>5</sup> and invaded Kent. One battle was fought at *Aylesford*, on the Medway, where Horsa was killed. The Britons were, however, defeated and driven from the coast region. In a few years the invaders had possession of the "castles of the shore"—*Dover*,<sup>6</sup> *Lymne*, and *Richborough*. The decisive struggle took place at the village of *Crayford* ;<sup>7</sup> the Britons were routed and compelled "to leave Kentland and flee to *Lundenburg*."<sup>8</sup>

Every victory was followed by the most cruel acts. Neither rank, age, nor sex was spared. The clergy were slain at the very altars, and the people were slaughtered in thousands. Some of the Britons were allowed to live, that they might become the slaves of the conquerors. Others fled to their kinsmen in the north-west of Gaul, and gave that region the name of *Brittany*.<sup>9</sup>

British writers give a different account of the conquest of Kent, and they explain the success of the Jutes by two incidents—the love of Vortigern for the daughter of Hengist, and a treacherous massacre of the British leaders.

"After the defeat of the Picts," they say, "Hengist built for himself a castle in Lincolnshire, and invited Vortigern to a grand banquet there. At the feast, there appeared before the dazzled eyes of the king a vision of beauty, fair as the angels in Paradise. *Rowena*, the golden-haired daughter of Hengist, stood before him. Filling a golden goblet with wine, she touched it with her lips, and wished him health. Then, kneeling at his feet, she presented the cup to the royal guest. At once he loved her, and desired to make her his



VORTIGERN AND ROWENA.

queen. Hengist consented, and received from the dotting Vortigern the Isle of Thanet."

The same writer says that Vortigern, with three hundred of his chiefs, went, in a friendly spirit, to a feast given by Hengist at Stonehenge.<sup>10</sup> That all at once, Hengist called out, "Take your daggers!" and that, upon this signal the whole of the unsuspecting British nobles were cruelly slaughtered. Vortigern's life was spared, but he was detained in close captivity.

Whether these stories be true or not, it is certain the Britons were completely driven out of Kent. The conquerors brought over their families, and settled in their new land with all their old customs and laws. What had been a Celtic province became, in people, language, and government, an English state.

1. ~~Hengist~~ means a horse. The figure of a White Horse was the standard of the Jutes.

2. ~~Horse~~ means a mare.

3. Richborough. See Map, page 22.

4. Isle of Thanet, i.e., the 'Island of Nobles.'

5. Medway, that is, 'middle water,' the river running through the middle of (the old kingdom of) Kent.

6. Dover, the nearest town in England to the Continent; only twenty-one miles from Calais.

7. Grayford, in the north-west of Kent, on the road from London to Chatham.

8. Lundenburg, i.e., London.

9. Brittany, the north-west province of France.

10. Stonehenge, see note 5, page 15.

## THE SAXONS.

THE next part in this great English invasion was the landing on the south coast of numerous wild crews of the Saxon<sup>1</sup> race. The word "Saxon" had long been known to the Britons, who gave that name to all the Germanic invaders. To this day, those who speak the Welsh and Gaelic<sup>2</sup> languages call the English people *Saeson* and *Sassenach*, i.e., Saxon.

Four settlements of this tribe established themselves in England. One colony<sup>3</sup> was formed in the south, and was called South Saxony or Sussex; a second

family conquered the country further west, and founded West Saxony or Wessex; similarly, a third group settled in East Saxony or Essex; while a subdivision of this last band found a home in Middle Saxony or Middlesex.

**The South Saxons.**—The South Saxons had their headquarters at a strong fort which they called, after one of their leaders, "*Cissa-ceaster*,"<sup>4</sup> i.e., "*Cissa's camp or castle*," now Chichester. The struggle with the Jutes of Kent had roused the Britons from the long lethargy<sup>5</sup> of the Roman rule. They fought with determined courage.



WALLS OF PEVENSEY CASTLE.

Although the Saxons were reinforced again and again, it took them eighteen years to drive back the brave defenders.

At last but one castle remained to the Britons—a strong place near Pevensey,<sup>6</sup> with huge Roman walls so thick and massive that they can be seen there to this very day. This the Saxons took, after a long and desperate struggle. Their chief, *Ella*, then became king of Sussex; and his followers extended themselves over the whole of that county, and the greater part of Surrey.

**The West Saxons.**—The West Saxons were led by *Cerdic*, and they were so powerful that they founded a very large kingdom. They first conquered Hampshire, but afterwards they occupied the country as far north as the Thames, and as far west as Cornwall. No other body of invaders met with so desperate a resistance. From the very day of their landing, they had to fight for every inch of the land. *Cerdic* called in the aid of his kinsmen in Sussex and Kent, as well as of those in Germany. Battle after battle was fought, and the Britons slowly but surely were compelled to retreat to the north and west. Finally, a determined band was surrounded and besieged at *Mount Badon*, now *Badbury*, near *Bath*. A brave British prince, *Arthur*, came to the rescue, gained a great victory over the Saxons, and stopped their further progress in that direction.



RUINS OF ARTHUR'S CASTLE AT TINTAGEL, ON  
THE WEST COAST OF CORNWALL.

About three hundred years after the great battle of *Mount Badon*, a descendant of the leader of the West

Saxons became king of all England. Hence we should remember Cerdic's name; because all the English sovereigns since, even to the time of Queen Victoria, have been his descendants. Thus the royal house of England is the oldest in Europe.

**The East and the Middle Saxons.**—The East Saxons had for their stronghold the town of Colchester,<sup>7</sup> which had been founded by the Romans; and the Middle Saxons had a still larger city for their capital, a town which afterwards grew to be the largest in the whole world.<sup>8</sup> These two bands had not nearly so hard a contest as the others. The east coast had long been exposed to attack from the sea, and the powerful kingdom of Kent was so close at hand that these invaders met with little resistance. Their rulers were usually under-kings, paying tribute to their more powerful neighbours.

Thus, after more than seventy years of constant warfare, and in spite of the heroic resistance of the Britons, the Saxons had not merely *conquered* the south-eastern portion of the island, but had *re-peopled* the land with a race English in blood and in language.

1. **Saxons**, see note 1, page 48.

2. **Welsh and Gaelic**, the two branches of the Celtic race in Britain. Max Müller thus classifies the family—

Celtic	{	Gaelic	{ Scottish. Ireland. Isle of Man.
		Cymric	{ Wales. Brittany. Strathclyde. Cornwall.

3. **Colony**. The Roman 'colonia' was simply a town inhabited by Roman citizens, generally veteran soldiers. The Saxon colonies, like those of later times, were settlements spread over entire districts.

4. The termination *ceaster* is from the Latin *castra*, a camp. Cf. *Cirencester*, *Manchester*, *Lancaster*, &c.

5. **Lethargy**, inactivity; connected with *Lethe*, the Greek word for *forgetfulness*. The ancients applied the name *Lethe* to 'the river of oblivion'—

'Whereof who drinks,  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets—  
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.'

6. **Pevensey**, called *Anderida*. At this time a vast forest covered this part of the country in which the Britons sought refuge after the capture of *Anderida*. The Old Saxon Chronicle says, 'Ella and Cissa beset *Anderida* and slew all the people therein, so that afterwards there was not a Briton left. *Pevensey* is on the coast of *Sussex*, a few miles north-west of *Beachy Head*.

7. **Colchester**, on the river *Colne* in *Essex*. The name combines the two Roman words, *colonia*, a colony, and *castra*, a camp.

8. **London**.



KING ARTHUR.

## THE STORY OF KING ARTHUR.

**W**HO has not heard some of the ballads and tales of King Arthur and the 'Knights of the Round Table?' He and his knights were patterns of honour, truth, and loyalty; and in many a battle under his flag, the 'Red Dragon,' they beat down their savage foes. His chief victory was at Mount Badon; and after the fatal fight of Camlan,<sup>1</sup> he was buried in the famous Abbey of Glastonbury<sup>2</sup> in Somerset.

The Welsh poets, however, say that King Arthur



never died, but 'passed away' in a weird boat conducted by three dark-robed queens.

But perhaps you would like to know the story as the poets tell it.<sup>3</sup>

King Arthur was the noblest of the kings of Britain, and he had twelve knights who fought with him against his enemies, the savage Saxons. So true and brave were these knights, that no man could say which was before another in honour. Therefore in his fair palace at Camelot<sup>4</sup> King Arthur had a round table, at which the twelve knights sat as equals—none being above another. At the close of the disastrous day of battle, when all his knights had fallen about their lord, the king called his nephew, Sir Bedivere, when they were alone, and gave him his magical sword, Excalibur, saying—



"I am so deeply smitten through the helm,  
That without help I cannot last till morn.

Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,  
Which was my pride : for thou rememberest how  
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Holding the sword—and how I rowed across  
And took it, and have worn it like a king.  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known.  
But now delay not ; take Excalibur  
And fling him far into the middle mere :  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.”<sup>8</sup>

So much did the knight admire the wonderful sword, with its beautiful hilt set in jewels, that he at first wished to hide it ; but, when Arthur repeated his command, he closed his eyes lest its beauty should tempt him, and with both hands swung the mighty sword and flung it far into the lake. When he looked after it, he saw an arm rise from the water, catch the wondrous hilt, and after waving the sword three times, draw it down out of sight under the lake. Sir Bedivere returned to Arthur and told what he had seen.

“Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems  
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,  
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,  
Not though I live three lives of mortal men,  
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.  
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;  
But when I looked again behold an arm,  
That caught him by the hilt and brandished him  
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.”

“Then my end is near,” said the king ; “carry me down to the water’s edge.”

So the knight with many tears bore Arthur to the lake ; and lo ! in the moonlight he now saw, like a dream,

a dusky barge waiting on the shore, with three queens and their attendants standing on the deck, all dressed in black robes and hoods. The knight placed the king in the mysterious boat, and stood in awe and silence while it slowly left the shore, 'till the hull looked one black dot against the verge of dawn.' So King Arthur passed away.

1. **Camlan**, in Cornwall.

2. **Glastonbury**, five miles south-west of Wells.

3. **Spenser and Tennyson** have both made Arthur the hero of great poems. Even Milton at one time proposed to make his great poem on Arthur. The later poets all drew from Sir Thomas Mallory's 'Morte

d'Arthur,' among the earliest of the books printed by Caxton.

4. **Camelot** or **Cadbury**, about twenty-seven miles south of Bath.

5. The poetical extracts are from Tennyson's 'Passing of Arthur,' in the 'Idylls of the King.'

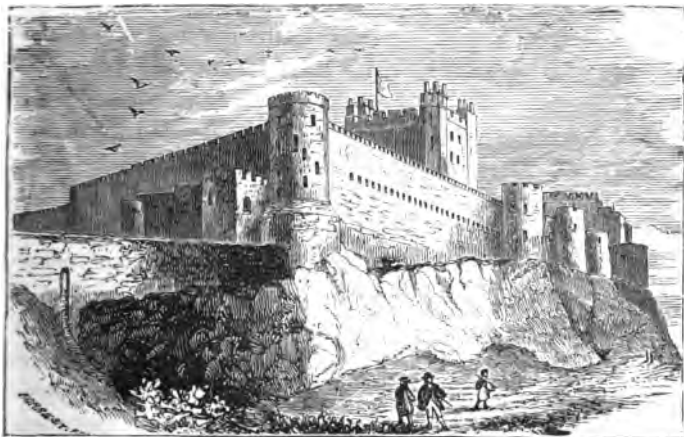
## THE ANGLES OF THE EAST AND NORTH.

**W**E have seen how the Jutes formed an English kingdom in Kent, and how the Saxons had other kingdoms in the south; but the third race, the Angles (or Engles), was more numerous than all the others together. They occupied so much of South Britain that the whole land was called 'Angle-land' or 'England,' and the common speech of the various tribes came to be known as 'English.'

The terrible struggle of the Britons with the West Saxons had not yet terminated when these new-comers burst like a torrent on the east coast of the island. The wearied but determined Britons fought with stubborn valour, and encountered the invaders in many battles. Their bravery was of no avail; the struggle was hopeless. Band after band of fresh foemen poured in from the sea, and the defenders were driven to the west. The conquerors, settling in the new land, founded the Kingdom

of *East Anglia*, with its two great divisions of *Northfolk* and *Southfolk*.<sup>1</sup>

While this conquest was going on, another swarm of Angles, under *Ida* the 'Flame-bearer,' landed at *Flam-borough Head* in *Yorkshire*, with fifty 'keels,'<sup>2</sup> one hundred years after *Hengist* settled in *Kent* with only three. He built a large stronghold, which he made his capital, and named, after his wife *Bebba*, *Bebbansburgh*. It is



BAMBOROUGH CASTLE.

now called *Bamborough Castle*,<sup>3</sup> and is still standing on that rocky coast, a grand and beautiful object :—

“ King *Ida*’s turrets, huge and square,  
From their tall rocks look firmly down,  
And on the swelling ocean frown.”

The conquered Britons felt so deeply this sign of their humiliation that they called it “the shame of *Bernicia*.” *Ida*’s conquest was called *Bernicia*, and extended from the *Tees*<sup>4</sup> to the *Firth of Forth*.

About thirteen years after the coming of the 'Flame-bearer,' another horde of Angles (under *Ella*, of whom we read in the story of the coming of Christianity to the Saxons) landed in the region further south, and formed the kingdom of *Deira*, in the district now called Yorkshire.

These two northern settlements were united in the beginning of the seventh century by *Ethelfrith*. This king was *Ida's* grandson. He married the daughter of *Ella*; and, having driven into exile her infant brother *Edwin*, the rightful heir, he seized *Deira* and joined it to *Bernicia*. The strong kingdom thus formed was called Northumbria. *Ethelfrith* also extended his dominions in all directions. He took *Chester* from the Britons, and destroyed a great monastery at *Bangor*.<sup>5</sup> Do not forget the exiled prince *Edwin*,<sup>6</sup> of whom you shall soon read as becoming one of the greatest of our early kings.

The defeated race were now altogether confined to the western part of the island. They no longer formed one kingdom. Both at the *Severn* and in the south of *Lancashire*, their enemies had pushed in between them like a wedge, so that the territory still left to the Britons was broken up into three separate states. Away in the south-west was the district of *West Wales*, which we call *Cornwall*.<sup>7</sup> Separated from this by *Wessex* was a central kingdom named *North Wales*, now simply termed *Wales*. Finally, there remained the northern region of *Cumbria* or *Strathclyde*,<sup>8</sup> which included *Westmoreland*, *Cumberland*, and the basin of the river *Clyde*.

As many as *eleven* kingdoms of *Jutes*, *Angles*, and *Saxons*, have been named. Only *seven* remained distinct for any length of time; and, accordingly, this is

usually known as the period of the *Heptarchy*,<sup>9</sup> or seven kingdoms. If you look at the map you will see that the Angles had by far the largest part of the whole country; and that is why this land came to be called England, and its people English.

Now, the different tribes of invaders had been neighbours and kinsmen in their old homes in the north of Germany; and they were almost the same in their

#### THE SAXON KINGDOMS.

1. Kent. (1)
2. Sussex. (2)
3. Essex. } Essex. (3)
4. Middlesex. }
5. Wessex. (4)
6. Bernicia. } Northumbria. (5)
7. Deira. }
8. East Anglia. (6)
9. Middle Anglia. }
10. Southumbria. } Mercia. (7)
11. Mercia. }



manners, habits, language, and religion. It was quite natural, then, that they should soon tend to become *one nation* in their new country. Wessex, indeed, was for a long time too busy in fighting with the Britons in the west to have much intercourse with the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy. Kent, however, soon established a kind of superiority over Middlesex, Essex, and East

Anglia. In the north, too, Northumbria claimed supremacy over the whole of Mercia.

We may mention that Northumbria soon became the most powerful of the kingdoms, and they all acknowledged its king as their head. The northern district was not, however, allowed to keep the chief place, for it was humiliated by Mercia, which was for a time the leading kingdom. Finally, Wessex came to the front, and established a superiority over all the others. Its ruler became "king of all England."

We should never forget this national consolidation. The great nations of the Continent remained for long after this broken up into separate parts, and each of them had to suffer many hardships before its different sections became united. Much of Britain's greatness and prosperity resulted from the early union of its various tribes into one strong nation, speaking the same language and subject to the same law. Thus the country's history clearly teaches the old lesson that "unity is strength."

1. **Northfolk and Southfolk**, now Norfolk and Suffolk.

2. **Keels**, or boats. Cf. the old Scottish song—  
'Weel may the keel row.'

3. **Bamborough Castle**, fifteen miles south of Berwick.

4. **Tees**. The river Tees forms the boundary between the counties of Durham and York.

5. **Bangor**, in Flintshire. There is another Bangor in Carnarvonshire, on the shores of the Menai Strait.

6. The story of Edwin is given in pp. 78-83.

7. **Cornwall**, from the British *corn*, a horn, and Saxon *wealh*, strange or foreign; the name thus means the 'Cornish Welsh.'

8. **Strathclyde**, the *valley* of the *Clyde*. Cf. Strathearn, &c.

9. **Heptarchy**, from the Greek *hepta*, seven, and *arche*, government. It should be kept in mind that Kent was the only kingdom of the *Jutes*; Sussex, Essex, Middlesex and Wessex were peopled by the *Saxons*; while Northumbria, Mercia and East Anglia (that is, the whole of England north of the *Thames* and east of the Severn and the Pennine Range) belonged to the *Angles*.



## THE GODS OF THE EARLY ENGLISH.

WE have seen how the Angles and Saxons were not only more savage than the Welsh Britons whom they drove to the west, but even than the Picts<sup>1</sup> who had formerly come from the north. That was not all, however; the Britons whom they treated so cruelly knew something of the Christian religion, while their invaders were pagans, and worshipped idols of wood and stone.

Yet we must not despise our forefathers for this. The Greeks and Romans were also heathens; and although the religion of the North was very gross and not so beautiful as that of the South, it was far stronger and much freer from degrading vice. It was the child of the lonely pine forests of Scandinavia,<sup>2</sup> of the rocky coasts swept by the huge ocean-waves, of the cold skies across which the black clouds rushed so madly when pursued by the shrieking storm-wind. In such a land, manhood and strength were the sole conditions of life; bravery and unwearied struggle, even against Nature, were the virtues most deserving of honour. The thoughts of these old-world warriors had no leisure for things merely pretty or beautiful; their imagination was filled with the mightier forces of Nature amidst whose giant-play they had been cradled.

Their chief god was a terrible one, called *Odin* or *Woden*, from whom all the 'Saxon' princes believed they were descended. He was the "father of slaughter, the active and roaring deity, who destroys and burns everything, and names those who are to be slain."

Although war was the chief delight of Woden, our forefathers believed that he watched over the boundaries of



farms, and punished those who removed their neighbour's 'landmarks.' He was also the protector of the high-roads, and the traveller looked to him for help. We thus see that, amidst all their fierce love for combat and war, these old English had, as Carlyle says, "a hatred of disorder, a hatred of injustice, which is the worst form of disorder."

This fierce god was worshipped all over England, and even at the present day we name the middle day of the week (Wednesday or Wodnesday) after him. The name of this deity is also preserved in such names as Odensee,<sup>3</sup> Wednesbury,<sup>4</sup> Woodensburgh,<sup>5</sup> and Wansford<sup>6</sup> or Wodensford.

Another day (Friday) is named from his wife *Freiya*, the goddess of joy and pleasure, love and fruitfulness; and *Thor* or *Thunr*, the thunder-god and lord of the destroying hammer, gave his name to Thursday. *Tiw* or *Tiva*, the god of night and darkness, was worshipped on Tuesday; and *Soetere*, the god of hate and revenge, was propitiated on Soeteresdaeg or Saturday.<sup>7</sup> Monday was the day of the moon; and on Sunday they delighted to praise their Sun-god, 'Balder the Beautiful.'

Of Thor, the thunder-god, our ancient forefathers had some curious tales. His hammer was said to be so heavy that it required ten men to carry it. Once, when the god was asleep, some of the giants carried it off to their own country, and hid it in a pit which was eight miles deep! When Thor awoke, he made a terrible din about the missing hammer. At last, a bargain was made between the gods and the giants—that, as soon as Thor's hammer should be returned to him, the chief of the giants should marry the goddess Freya.

Then the cunning Thor put on Freya's dress, and

went to visit the giants. They thought it was Freya, but began to stare when their guest, by way of refreshment, ate up an ox and eight salmon; and the bridegroom, when he went close to the bride to salute her, started back in terror as he saw the fierce glance of her eyes. When the hammer was brought, Thor jumped up and seized it; and, with a terrible shout, he soon destroyed every one of the giants!

Another story of Thor shows well the rough humour of our fathers. The giants taunted the god that he could not empty their great drinking-horn. The Thunderer laughed loud as he accepted the challenge, for none could drink so deep as he. Seizing the horn, he swallowed a mighty draught. It was all in vain! He had but lowered the contents of the vessel by a few feet, and he was very sad. His rage may be imagined, when the knavish giants afterwards confessed that they had stuck the opened end of the horn into the German Ocean! So that Thor had been drinking the waters of the sea; and the story says that he had caused a very low tide!

These old Goths believed in immortality, and pictured to themselves a future life of war and feasting. The home of the gods was called *Valhalla*. Into this heaven, all the active and brave were received at death. Their days were to be spent in joyous combat; but at evening their wounds were to be healed and they were to feast together, reclining on couches and drinking great draughts of ale from the skulls of the enemies they had slain in battle.

The slothful and cowardly were doomed to abide in a dismal land called *Niflheim*,<sup>8</sup> ruled by a terrible goddess called Hela. There they dwelt in the house of Anguish,

dining at the table of Famine, and sleeping on the couch of Leanness !

1. *Picts*, see note 5, page 51.

2. *Scandinavia*, i.e., Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

3. *Odensee*, in Funen, Denmark.

4. *Wednesbury*, in Staffordshire, eight miles north-west of Birmingham.

5. *Woodensburgh*, in Kent.

6. *Wansford*, in Northamptonshire, eight miles west of Peterborough.

7. Sometimes wrongly supposed to be named from the Roman god, *Saturn*.

8. *Nidheim*, i.e., the home of mist.

## HOW THE EARLY ENGLISH BECAME CHRISTIANS.

HOW did the early English become Christians ? It was through Gregory the Great,<sup>1</sup> one of the best of the Popes, who delighted in sending missionaries out to various countries. One day, before he was made Pope, he saw several children standing in the market-place at Rome to be sold as slaves. He was astonished at the rosy cheeks, golden hair, and blue eyes of three or four, who were so different from the swarthy captives of the south.

"Who are these beautiful children ?" said the interested monk.

"These are Angles," replied the trader.

"Angles !" cried he ; "they have the faces of *angels*, and ought to be heirs with the angels of heaven."

"What is their country ?" asked the kindly priest.

"Deira," was the reply.

"De irâ, *from the wrath*," responded Gregory. "Ay ! they shall be plucked from God's ire, and saved by Christ's mercy."

"What is the name of their king ?" was his next question.

"Ella or Alla," they told him.

"Alleluia," cried he, "the praises of God shall yet be sung in their country."

So Gregory found out all he could about the country of the Angles or Engles, and we are told that he bought some English slaves, in order to learn to speak to them in their own tongue. At length, in the year 597, he heard that Ethelbert<sup>2</sup> the king of Kent had married Bertha the daughter of the French king, who was already a Christian. Gregory immediately sent a band of missionaries, under a zealous priest called *Augustine*,<sup>3</sup> to Kent, with presents for Queen Bertha.



ROME.

A very interesting account is given of the landing of these monks.

After they had left Rome, they heard so much about the dangers of the way and the savage disposition of the islanders, that they turned back. Gregory urged them to obey the commands of our Saviour to go "to the ends of the earth" and "to teach all nations." They were

then ashamed of their fears, set out once more, and reached our shores in safety. The fair-haired Kentish peasants were surprised to see the dark Italian priests; but they received them kindly, and sent word of their coming to the king.



ST. AUGUSTINE.

A throne was set up in the Isle of Thanet,<sup>4</sup> and on it sat Ethelbert and his Queen Bertha, while round them stood the great men of their kingdom. The band of monks advanced, dressed in gorgeous robes of silk and gold, each carrying in his hand a flashing silver crucifix. They bore aloft a picture of our Saviour, and some sang in concert the strains of the litany!—"Turn from this city, O Lord, thine anger and wrath." They were answered by others with the jubilant shout of the old Hebrew worship, 'Alleluia'—the very word used by Gregory years before, when he pitied the young English captives in the slave-market of Rome.

In a short time, Ethelbert and his wise men agreed to forsake Woden and Thor; and Augustine was able to write a glad letter to Pope Gregory, telling him that the king of Kent had been baptized, and that ten thousand Jutes had become Christians and were now worshippers of the true God.

Augustine's first church was in Canterbury;<sup>5</sup> and so,

by and by, he was made the first bishop. That shows you why the Archbishop of Canterbury has ever since been the Primate<sup>6</sup> of the Church of England.

Whoever goes to see the grand cathedral of Canterbury should not forget to visit the little church of St. Martin in another part of the same city. That quaint old building is where Queen Bertha worshipped God before Augustine came.

In a short time the Saxon king at London also became a Christian; and on an island near the Thames was built St. Peter's Church, which afterwards became Westminster Abbey, one of the most interesting old churches in the world.

1. **Gregory the Great** became Pope in 590.  
2. **Ethelbert** was the first Bretwalda. See note 5, page 83.

3. **Augustine** must not be mistaken for Augustine the great father of the Church, who was bishop of Hippo, in Africa, about 200 years earlier.

4. **Isle of Thanet.** To this island the first band

of our Germanic forefathers came; here the first Christian missionaries landed; and here also the Danish invaders first wintered.

5. **Canterbury**, literally the *burgh* or town of the *Cantii*—the old British tribe from whom Kent takes its name.

6. **Primate**, the *first* or chief bishop.



ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH.

## THE STORY OF EDWIN OF NORTHUMBRIA.



EDWIN.

**Y**OU will remember Edwin the infant prince of Deira, whose brother-in-law Ethelfrith had taken his kingdom from him. The little fugitive escaped with some faithful friends, and spent many years in exile. His life was often in danger during these years of wandering, and he had to suffer many hardships before he became the great king of all Nor-

thumbria. The trials he endured were very useful to him, for they trained him to be a strong and self-reliant man—one whom no difficulties could dishearten, who would never sit down idle while any duty remained to be done, who was all his life a willing and earnest worker.

After much wandering they took refuge with Redwald, who was king of the East Angles. When Ethelfrith heard of this, he sent a message to King Redwald, offering him money if he would kill Edwin. Redwald refused to kill the young prince; and then Ethelfrith threatened to come with an army and ravage his land. This message frightened the good king, because Ethelfrith had already gained several great battles, and his army was much larger than that of the East Anglian king; so he told the messengers to wait for a day or two, and that then he would either deliver Edwin into their hands or have him slain.

When Prince Edwin was told secretly by night of the great danger he was in, he refused to steal away and save his life by hiding in some other land. He said he had given his word to Redwald that he would remain with him; and he must keep his promise.

A few minutes afterwards, as he sat alone and very sad, a strange thing happened. He saw, all at once, a man of venerable<sup>1</sup> appearance, who asked if he wished to be free from all his sorrows and dangers. Edwin said he would give all that he had to be released from them. Then his visitor made him promise that when he should be restored to his kingdom and sit on his father's throne, he would obey him who now foretold his greatness. Edwin promised to do so faithfully when the time should come; and then, after laying his hand on Edwin's head for a sign, his strange visitor vanished from his sight.

Starting up, Edwin asked all the servants about his visitant; but no one had seen any stranger, none could say anything about him. Then Edwin knew that he had seen a vision, and kept the cheering message safe in his memory.

Next day, King Redwald told the Northumbrian messengers that he would not give up Edwin into their hands, because he had given his promise as a king to protect his guest. So Ethelfrith gathered a great army of the North Angles to fight against the East Angles. Redwald met him in Nottinghamshire, and there Ethelfrith was totally defeated and slain. By that battle<sup>2</sup> on the banks of the Idle,<sup>3</sup> Edwin regained his father's crown, and became king over all the country from the Humber to the Forth.

When holding court in his city by the river Derwent,<sup>4</sup>



a message was brought to Edwin from the king of Wessex; and as he sat listening, the messenger drew a poisoned dagger and rushed forward to strike him. One of the king's thanes threw himself before the treacherous assassin, and saved Edwin's life at the cost of his own; but such was the force of the murderous blow that the king was wounded by the dagger after it had pierced the thane's body. On recovering, Edwin made war on the West Saxons and conquered them, thus reaching the height of his greatness.

Edwin now not only reigned over all Northumbria, but he became the greatest of all the kings in the whole country, and was called *Bretwalda*,<sup>5</sup> or chief ruler in Britain, being over-lord of every other king or chief, whether in Mercia, or Wessex, or East Anglia, or Wales. Kent alone remained independent.

King Edwin built *Edwin's-burgh*, which we now call Edinburgh, and that shows how far north his kingdom went.

He and his people were still heathens, but he married the Christian daughter of the king of Kent. Once when he was going to battle, King Edwin said that if he returned victorious he would believe in the God worshipped by his wife and her bishop. After having defeated his enemy, he no longer went to the temples of Woden or Thor; and one day as he sat alone, his queen's bishop, Paulinus, came and laid his hand on the king's head. Edwin then remembered the sign of his strange visitor at Redwald's palace, and fell at the bishop's feet, saying he would obey him in everything.

After this, Edwin with all his thanes and wise men were baptized; and a Christian church was built in York, the capital city. The rude building thus made

by these North Angles afterwards became York Minster, one of the finest cathedrals anywhere to be seen. Paulinus was the first archbishop of the see.

A meeting of the wise men of Northumbria was held



EDINBURGH CASTLE.

to hear what Paulinus had to say, and to decide about the new religion. Coifi, the high-priest of Woden and Thor, confessed that his gods had never done any good to those who served them.



GOIFI DESTROYING THE TEMPLE OF WODEN AND THOR.

An aged warrior then spoke; his hair was white with years, and his face was seamed with the scars of old battles; he was as wise in council as he had been brave in war, and all listened reverently to his words.

"O king!" said he, "the life of man is like this. You sit in the hall with your wise men and thanes about you. On a winter's night the fire burns brightly on the hearth, and all within is glowing warmth and comfort; but out of doors the icy wind bites bitterly, and rain mingled with snow chills the blood. Driven by the cruel storm, a sparrow cometh in at the one door of the hall, and enjoyeth for a little time the light and the heat. Anon it flieth out at the other door into the fierce tempest, and we see it no more. Such is the life of man! It is but for a moment, and we know not what was before it, nor what cometh hereafter. If Paulinus can tell us whence we came and whither we go, let us hear his words and obey his God."

Then Paulinus preached to them the story of creation and the gospel of future happiness through the salvation of Jesus Christ. Their hearts melted within them, and they wept for joy.

"The Council closed, the priest, in full career,  
Rides forth an armed man and hurls a spear  
To desecrate the fane which heretofore  
He served in folly. Woden falls, and Thor  
Is overturned."

Thus it was that Northumbria became Christian.

1. **Venerable**, worthy of reverence.

2. The battle was fought in 617.

3. **Idle**, a tributary of the Trent.

4. **Derwent**, a tributary of the Ouse. There is another Derwent, a tributary of the Trent.

5. **Bretwalda**, probably means 'powerful king.' Some say it is equivalent to 'Broad

wielder,' &c., Wide Ruler. In some books it is erroneously supposed to mean 'Ruler of Britain.'

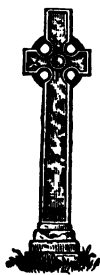
6. The priests of the Saxons were not allowed to ride on a horse nor to carry weapons. Coifi thus showed his contempt for the old religion.



## THE MERCIAN HEATHENS.

MANY of the English people, however, still believed in the gods Woden and Thor; and Penda, king of Mercia, joined the king of Wales to make war upon Edwin of Northumbria because he had been baptized. So King Edwin met the heathen Penda in the fatal battle of *Heathfield*<sup>1</sup> by the river Trent, which, alas! was his last undertaking. The great and good Bretwalda lost his life in the fight, and was beheaded on the field. His head was carried home by the sorrowing Angles of the North, and buried in the porch of his own church of York.

The heathen host spread slaughter over the whole of Northumbria. The good Queen Bertha fled to Kent, where she ended her days in a convent she had previously built; and with her went the aged Paulinus, who became bishop of Rochester. Heathenism was left triumphant in the kingdom of the dead Edwin.<sup>2</sup>



IONIC CROSS.

Next, Penda turned upon East Anglia; and, having defeated its king with great slaughter, he re-established paganism there, and destroyed the Christian churches which had been built above the ancient temples of Woden and Thor.

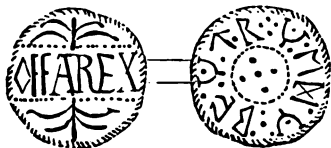
The two successors of Edwin fought bravely for the Christian faith. The first of these, *Oswald*, had been taught in Iona<sup>3</sup> by the followers of St. Columba.<sup>4</sup> Bishop Aidan, one of these northern missionaries, who succeeded the fugitive Paulinus, founded a monastery in the island of Lindisfarne.<sup>5</sup> Oswald helped these good Culdees to spread the gospel over all those parts of England which were still heathen. But, alas! the cruel Penda was still

the powerful upholder of paganism. Full of fury, he totally defeated the Christian army in the great battle of Maserfield.<sup>6</sup> The pious Oswald was slain and his body mutilated, and Penda established his religion even over Wessex.

At last came the day of retribution. *Oswy*, the next king of Northumbria, met the Mercian host on the banks of the Winwed, near Leeds.<sup>7</sup> There perished the now aged Penda, and with him fell the heathendom he had so mightily supported.

Soon after the death of Penda, the Mercians also became Christians. As Augustine had taught the gospel in Kent and Paulinus in Northumbria, so Chad baptized the Angles of Penda's kingdom; and if you visit the famous cathedral of Lichfield,<sup>8</sup> you will see that it is named St. Chad's, because he was bishop of that see.

**King Offa the Terrible.**—Long after the heathen Penda was dead, there was a very powerful king of Mercia whom men called *Offa* the Terrible. He made Mercia the strongest kingdom in England, just as Edwin had made Northumbria. Offa conquered much of the Welsh country to the west of the Severn, and, to keep



SILVER PENNY OF OFFA, KING OF MERCIA.

the Welsh back, he made a huge dyke, which can yet be partly seen. This earthen rampart was a hundred miles long, and stretched from the Dee to the mouth of the Severn. Portions may still be traced, and to this day it is called by the Welsh 'Clawdd Offa.' This brilliant king was respected by Charles the Great, the famous Emperor of the Franks, who sent him a Hungarian sword, a baldric,<sup>9</sup> and two silken cloaks.

Offa made some good laws, and encouraged learning ; but towards the end of his long reign he was guilty of a base crime. Ethelbert, the young king of the East Angles, had agreed with Offa that he should marry Offa's daughter, and when he came to Mercia to fetch away his bride, he was murdered in the court of the palace at Tamworth.<sup>10</sup> The cruel Mercian instantly took possession of Ethelbert's kingdom. Four years later (796), the terrible Offa died and was buried at Bedford.

1. **Heathfield**, now Hatfield, in the West Riding of York, near the river Don.

2. **Edwin** was killed in 613.

3. **Iona**, or Icolmkill, one of the Inner Hebrides, famous for the ruins of the Cathedral, &c., founded by St. Columba in 565. Many of the old Pictish, Irish, Norwegian, and even French kings were buried here.

4. **St. Columba** (520 to 597). He was an Irish missionary, who, having founded a monastery at Iona, devoted himself to the con-

version of the Picts. His successors carried the gospel even to Iceland.

5. **Lindisfarne**, hence called Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland.

6. **Maserfield**, now Oswestry, in Shropshire.

7. **Leeds**, on the Aire in the West Riding of York : now the great centre of the woollen manufacture.

8. **Lichfield**, near the Tame, a tributary of the Trent, in Staffordshire.

9. **Baldric**, a sword-belt.

10. **Tamworth**, on the Tame in Staffordshire.

## HOW WESSEX BECAME SUPREME.



EGBERT.

YOU have seen how powerful Northumbria became under Edwin, and then how Mercia became still more so under the heathen Penda and Offa the Terrible ; but soon a third kingdom was to prove itself stronger than them both. The Angles of the north and middle country were soon to be ruled by the Saxon kings of Wessex ; till at last, when those three principal kingdoms were joined together under one

*Over-lord*, the whole English people became one nation. We must therefore find out how Wessex rose to be the first kingdom in all the land, and then see what came of it.

The settlers in Wessex had a much longer contest with the Britons than any of the other tribes of Angles or Saxons had. Although often victorious, they were again and again defeated, and it was only after years of constant struggle that their kingdom was firmly established. In this way, the West Saxons became the most martial of the Saxon tribes, and this prepared them to take the first place among the English states.

**The good King Ina.**—Amidst many warlike and successful kings, the West Saxons had two who may be called ‘Great.’ The first of these was *Ini*<sup>1</sup> or *Ina*, who was not only a skilful warrior but a wise and prudent ruler. He took Somerset from the Britons, and founded the town of *Taunton*.<sup>2</sup> It is remarkable that he was the first of the Saxon conquerors who treated the vanquished people with justice and humanity. He allowed all of them to retain their property, encouraged marriages between them and the Saxons, and ruled all his subjects alike with strict impartiality.

The laws of his country, before his time rough and unwritten, he gathered into a ‘Code,’ long known as the ‘Laws of the good King Ina.’ Indeed, his long reign of thirty-seven years was a glorious one, and Wessex became very prosperous. Like his great descendant Alfred, he was anxious to encourage learning and learned men. He took one curious way of doing this. He asked every head of a household who could afford it to send him a penny.<sup>3</sup> These pennies he sent to Rome to build a school for the English. Many of the

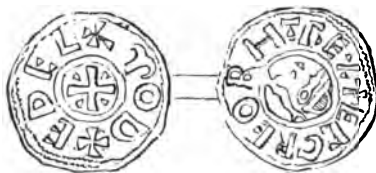


people went there to study, and this did much to elevate the Saxons.

The wise government of this great king still further prepared Wessex for its grand position as the sovereign state of all England—the very heart of what is now so great an empire. Wessex continued to be strong; for, twenty-seven years after the death of Ina, the West Saxons gained a splendid victory over the king of Mercia on the banks of the Windrush.<sup>4</sup> This battle marks the actual beginning of the ascendancy of Wessex.

Ina built a famous monastery at Glastonbury, on the site of the old British abbey where King Arthur was said to have been buried.

**Egbert, the Bright-eyed.**—But the greatest king of the blood of Cerdic the founder of the West Saxons, was *Egbert*,<sup>5</sup> who attained to such power that he was called



SILVER PENNY OF EGBERT.

Bretwalda, or powerful king. Like Edwin of Northumbria, he had been driven into exile by a usurper, and the hardships of his youth well fitted him to become

a strong prince. For fifteen years he lived in France, where he won the regard of the illustrious Charlemagne. In the service of this great prince, he was trained not only in the art of war, but in the principles of enlightened government. He was taught also that a people to be strong must be educated, and that the smaller states of a country should all be joined under one ruler. These lessons he sought to carry out, when, upon the death of the usurper, he was called to the throne of Wessex.

He first established his supremacy over the Britons

both of Cornwall and of Wales. The king of Mercia, who had subdued East Anglia, Essex, and Kent, now invaded Wessex, but was completely defeated in the great battle of *Ellandun*.<sup>6</sup>

The tributary kingdoms were then easily conquered, and in 827 Mercia acknowledged Egbert as Over-lord. Northumbria, which was in a state of anarchy, at once yielded without a struggle. Both of these great states were allowed to choose their own kings, but they had to pay a regular tribute to Wessex.

Finally, Egbert defeated the Britons of Cornwall (along with the terrible Danes, of whom you will read in the next lesson) in the great battle of *Hengestesdun* or *Hengston*;<sup>7</sup> and two years later he captured Chester, the capital of Gwynedd, the British kingdom of North Wales. Egbert was thus lord of all the English race; not only the Saxons of the south, but the Angles of the east and the north also acknowledged his supremacy.

Every state admitted his power as Over-lord, from the German Ocean on the east to the Irish Sea on the west, and from the Roman walls of Pevensey on the south coast to the Castle of Edinburgh in the far north. The 'Golden Dragon' of the West Saxons was now everywhere triumphant.

Although Egbert kept his old title 'King of the West Saxons,' yet he should be regarded as 'King of the English';<sup>8</sup> and in many histories he is called the 'First King of all England.'

1. Ina ruled from 688 to 725.

2. Taunton on the Tone in Somerset.

3. The money collected in this way was called *Rom-feoh* or *Rome-scot*, afterwards imposed upon all England under the name of Peter's Pence; finally abolished in the reign of Henry VIII. in 1534.

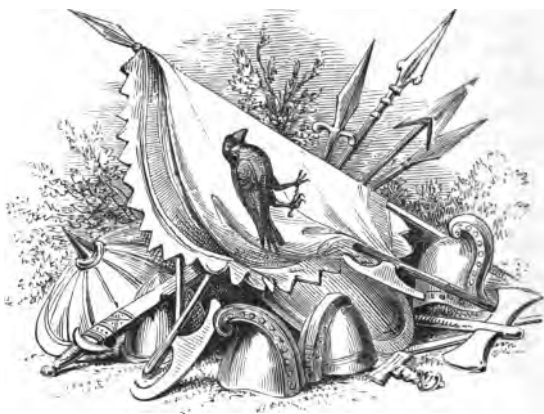
4. Windrush, a tributary of the Thames.

5. Egbert came to the throne of Wessex in 800.

6. Ellandun, near Wilton in Wiltshire.

7. Hengston, in Cornwall, near the Tamar.

8. Egbert, in a few of his charters, did style himself 'Rex Anglorum,' that is, King of the Angles, or English.



### THE DANES.

**D**URING King Egbert's time, and for several reigns afterwards, the English people were terribly plagued by hosts of sea-rovers who sailed over from Norway and Denmark. These Danes were quite as savage as the early forefathers of the English themselves had ever been, and wherever they landed they killed and plundered without mercy. The figure-heads of their ships were generally monsters with open mouths, and the sterns were carved like a dragon's tail. They seemed to delight in tempests, as if the ocean was their home, and to have no other pursuit or object than bloodshed, robbery, and destruction. Such was the ferocity of their mad daring, that the very sight of their standard, the 'Black Raven,' caused horror on every coast.

So numerous were those savage pirates, that when one crew was defeated in one place, another larger one was certain to land at another place. East Anglia, Yorkshire, all Northumbria, were soon at their mercy.



DANISH SHIPS.

In Norfolk their daring leaders, the two sons of Lodbrog (whose story you will find in the next section), ordered Edmund, the king of that country, to worship Odin, and abandon Christ. When he refused to do so, they tied him to a tree and shot him to death with arrows. That is why the last king of the East Angles is called a martyr, and the beautiful abbey of St. Edmunds<sup>1</sup> took its name from him. There are many churches in Norfolk and Suffolk where they show pictures of the good king pierced by the arrows.

Those fierce Northmen delighted to plunder, burn, and destroy every church and abbey they came to, one reason being that they found more gold, silver, and other valuable booty, in them than anywhere else. They thought nothing of murdering priests at the altar, or tossing little children on the points of their spears; but they sometimes spared the men and women, in order to sell them as slaves.

**Regnar Lodbrog.**—One of the most daring of the pirate Danes was King Lodbrog, and his name is better known because he was also a poet, and wrote a famous death-song, which he is said to have sung with terrible glee when undergoing torments. Lodbrog sailed the German Ocean with his pirate crew till one day a storm scattered his fleet, and his ship was wrecked on the rocky shores of Northumbria. His enemies were delighted to have the wild pirate at their mercy; and Ella,<sup>2</sup> the English king, ordered him to be thrown, bound hand and foot, into a pit full of snakes, so that he might be stung to death. It is said that Lodbrog never quailed for an instant, but met his cruel fate with disdainful laughter as he loudly sang his death-song:—

“We fought with our swords !

“In my boyhood we fought towards the east ; we made torrents of blood flow to gorge the beasts of prey and the yellow-footed bird. There the hard steel sounded on the lofty helmets. The whole sea was blood. The crow waded in the gore of the slain !

“We fought with our swords !

“In my twentieth year we lifted our spears on high, and everywhere we spread our renown. Eight barons we overcame in the east, and plentifully we feasted the eagle by that slaughter. The hot stream of wounds ran into the ocean. The army fell before us.

“We fought with our swords !

“In more than fifty battles have I raised my flag. When a youth I learned to make my sword red, and my hope was that no king would be more renowned. The goddesses of death will soon, call to me ! Death is no sorrow !

“We fought with our swords !

“Now I end my song ! The goddesses call me away, they whom Odin has sent from his hall to meet me. Seated aloft, I shall joyfully drink ale with the goddesses of death ! The hours of my life are run out. With a smile shall I die !”

Such are some of the twenty-nine verses of Lodbrog's death-song, which was often sung by the Danes ; and many of those who landed in the North said they had come to take revenge on the English for his death. However that may be, we know that they terribly harassed France, Scotland, and Ireland, and became masters of all the north, middle, and east of England. In fact, it was not till the reign of Egbert's grandson, Alfred, that our country really had peace with those Northmen, and it is of that famous reign that we must now tell the story.

1. Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk, on the Lark, | 2. Ella was the *under-king* of Northumbria,  
a tributary of the Great Ouse.

# SAXON ENGLAND.



# IV. ALFRED THE GREAT AND HIS FAMILY.

## ALFRED AS ATHELING<sup>1</sup> OR PRINCE.



ALFRED.

ALFRED THE GREAT is not only the best of all the kings who have reigned in England, but he is also one of the best men that have ever appeared in any country. His whole life was spent for the good of his people; and so wisely and successfully did he rule, that the English race will for ever be proud of him.

“The Great by right divine thou only art !  
 Fair star, that crowns the front of England’s morn,  
 Royal with Nature’s royalty inborn,  
 And English to the very heart of heart !” \*

It was in the face of many difficulties and dangers that King Alfred had to work and strive. Without great strength of mind, without long-continued patience, without unwearied energy, he could never have done so much for his country and his people.

Alfred had three brothers older than himself, who one after another wore the crown; and during their reigns, as well as in that of his father, *Ethelwulf*,<sup>2</sup> the

\* Francis T. Palgrave, ‘Visions of England.’



English people were terribly afflicted by the Danes. You remember how these Norsemen plagued King *Egbert*, Alfred's grandfather; since that time, the wild sea-rovers had crossed the German Ocean in such numbers that the English had been forced to give up a great part of the land to them.

The mild and indolent disposition of Alfred's father unfitted him for the duties of a king in such troublous times. In his reign, the Danes for the first time ventured to *winter* in England. He thought more of Alfred than of any of his other sons, and wished him to be his successor. But the Witan decided that Ethelbald,<sup>3</sup> the eldest son, should succeed. His reign is destitute of any great event.

The short reign of Ethelbert<sup>4</sup> was marked by an inroad of Danes, who destroyed *Winchester*, but were finally driven off by the men of Hampshire and Berkshire. When Ethelred,<sup>5</sup> the third son of Ethelwulf, came to the throne, the chief leaders of the invaders were the sons of Regnar Lodbrog. By the year 871, the 'heathens' (as the Danes were then called) had become masters of East Anglia, of Northumbria, and nearly all Mercia, so that not much had been left for the English.

In the beginning of that year, the Danes made a fierce attempt to seize Wessex also. In no less than nine battles the two royal brothers, Ethelred and Alfred, led the English against the invaders. One battle was fought at *Reading*<sup>6</sup> on the Thames, where the English had the worst of it; but, four days afterwards, they had their revenge upon the Danes in the famous battle of *Ashdown*,<sup>7</sup> in the same county.

The Danes had two armies, one commanded by two

kings, and the other by five earls. King Ethelred prepared to meet the first; while his brother, Alfred the Atheling, went to attack the second. The Danish earls<sup>8</sup> had drawn up their army on a height, but Alfred advanced against the invaders with such courage that they were totally defeated and their five leaders slain. Alfred's brother was also successful, and killed one of the Norse kings with his own hand.

The brave Ethelred did not long survive this battle; he died at Easter<sup>9</sup> in that same year (some say from a wound received in fighting the Danes), and left his troubled kingdom to Alfred, then only twenty-two years of age.

1. **Atheling**, or **Etheling**, was a title of the king's son, especially if born during his father's reign. The word *Athel*, 'noble,' is also seen in *Athelney*, *Athelstan*, &c., and the (patronymic) ending *-ing* is seen in the word 'king' or *kyning*.

2. **Ethelwulf**, 836-857.

3. **Ethelbald**, 857-860.

4. **Ethelbert**, 860-866.

5. **Ethelred**, 866-871.

6. **Reading**, in Berkshire, at the junction of the Kennet and the Thames. Alfred was born at *Wantage*, in the same county, A.D. 849.

7. **Ashdown** ('the hill of the ash'), near Reading, in Berks. The success of the English

in this battle is said to have been due to the impetuous valour of Alfred, who with half of the army defeated the Danes while his brother Ethelred was praying for victory.

8. **Earls**. The title 'earl,' given to the great rulers of the country, was derived from the Danish *jarl*. About the year 1020 it was applied to the Saxon *ealdormen*, or chief magistrates. The Saxons seem to have confused the Danish *jarl* with their own term *eorl*, which simply means 'noble.'

9. **Easter**, the first Sunday after Good Friday, commemorates the resurrection of Christ. The word is derived from *Eostre*, the Saxon goddess of spring.

## KING ALFRED'S BOYHOOD.

**T**HOUGH Alfred's youth had been spent in constant war with the savage Danes, yet he had enjoyed many pleasant days in his boyhood.

When he was only four or five years of age, his father, King *Ethelwulf*, sent him on a journey to Rome. Two years afterwards, they went there together to pay their respects to the Pope, and pray at the great altar of St. Peter.

Now, on such a journey, the young prince must have

learned much ; and, as they went through France and Italy, crossing mountains and rivers, his father no doubt pointed out to him many marvels that he would never forget. Not only did he see Rome, with its beautiful buildings, but he also visited the court of the king of the Franks,<sup>1</sup> which was then much more splendid than anything to be seen in England.

Alfred and his father stayed about a year in Rome.



ALFRED AND THE QUEEN.

On their way home, they were for some time entertained by Charles the Bald,<sup>2</sup> king of France, who gave his daughter Judith to be King Ethelwulf's second wife. Thus the little Prince Alfred came to take part in a grand marriage ceremony, which took place in the Cathedral<sup>3</sup> of Rheims,<sup>4</sup> one of the most beautiful buildings in France.

Queen Judith was afterwards married to the Count of Flanders,<sup>5</sup> and so became an ancestor of Matilda of Flanders, the wife of William the Conqueror.

Bishop Asser,<sup>6</sup> who was a dear friend of Alfred the Great, tells us many stories about him. When Alfred was a little boy, he learned to read sooner than his big brothers; and this is how the good bishop accounts for it. They were all fond of hearing the old ballads and English songs, as boys still are; and one day the queen showed the boys a book full of such poems, all beautifully illuminated<sup>7</sup> with pictures and borders in red, and blue, and gold. The three princes were full of admiration for the book, and the queen said, "Whoever shall first be able to read me one of those pretty songs will have the book for a prize!"

No doubt the queen knew very well who would gain the prize. It was Alfred, the youngest of the brothers, who afterwards became a very good scholar, as you shall see presently. The other brothers knew a great deal more about horses, hawks, and hounds, about crossbows, spears, and swords, than they did of reading and writing, poems and histories.

Alfred, however, though so fond of books, thoroughly enjoyed all outdoor sports. We are told by Bishop Asser that he was very expert in feats of strength and activity, and was "excellent cunning"<sup>8</sup> in all hunting."<sup>9</sup> He was often seen among the foremost in the chase, tracking the wild boar or wild bull, shooting the red-deer on the moors of Devon, or the eagle as he flew over the woods of Berkshire, or spearing the salmon which then abounded in the Thames.

That Alfred was a brave and skilful soldier was abundantly proved in the nine battles which were

fought in the last year of the reign of his brother Ethelred.

1. **Franks.** The Franks were a German tribe who first invaded Gaul in 256, and established the kingdom in 418. From them the modern name 'France' is derived, and perhaps also the English adjective 'frank,' meaning 'free.' Cf. the word 'slave' from 'Sclav.'
2. **Charles the Bald,** one of the three grandsons of Charlemagne. His brother Louis became Emperor of Germany, and his eldest brother Lothaire received Italy.
3. **Cathedral,** literally a bishop's *seat*; applied to the principal church in every diocese.
4. **Rheims** was formerly the ecclesiastical metropolis of France; in its cathedral the French monarchs were crowned. The city stands on a plain between the Marne and the Aisne, two tributaries of the Seine, about ninety miles to the east of Paris.
5. **Flanders,** at that time an independent state ruled by its Count, is now included in Belgium and France.
6. **Asser,** a Welshman, educated at St. David's, a man of great genius; chief work, 'The Life and Acts of Alfred.'
7. **Illuminated.** Before the introduction of printing, manuscripts were often ornamented with beautifully-painted borders and pictures; such an MS. is said to be 'illuminated.'
8. **'Excellent cunning.'** That is, 'exceeding clever.' The word 'cunning' formerly meant 'knowing' or 'skilful.'
9. Alfred afterwards wrote a book upon hawking; and, at one time, himself instructed his hawkers, falconers, and hound-trainers.

## KING ALFRED BRAVE IN TROUBLE.

FROM his boyhood till he became a man, Alfred had almost constantly fought against the Danes; and when his brother died, and he was made king, the English in Wessex were still in the thick of the struggle. That same year there was a great battle at *Wilton*,<sup>1</sup> near the cathedral town of Salisbury in Wiltshire. Here Alfred defeated the Danes, and forced them to make peace with him.

After this, for three or four years, the young king and his people were left undisturbed by the terrible invaders. The Danes, however, were not idle elsewhere; many more of them settled in Northumbria and Scotland, as well as in Mercia and East Anglia.

During that time of peace, King Alfred accomplished a great work—he built the *first English fleet*. He said, 'Long ago the English were as good sailors as these hateful Danes; why should we not build some ships and fight them on sea?' This was a splendid thought; and

to the present day its fleet has been the safeguard of England.

So the English built and equipped some ships ; and when the Danes sailed to the coast of Dorset, thinking to land there just as they had landed and plundered in a hundred other places, they were attacked by Alfred's little fleet and driven back with the loss of one of their ships. Therefore, when you hear of battles gained at sea by Englishmen, remember that the *first naval victory* was won by Alfred the Great.

So was the second. Next time, the Danes, in much greater force, marched southward under their king, *Guthrum*. After taking oaths upon the ' holy golden bracelet ' <sup>2</sup> that they would leave Alfred's kingdom, they made a cowardly attack upon him as he was riding with a small force to Winchester. <sup>3</sup> Alfred, however, escaped, and speedily pursued the false Danes to Exeter, <sup>4</sup> where they had gone expecting to be joined by another army of invaders sailing round from the Thames. Now was the moment for the new English fleet ; helped by a storm which arose, Alfred's ships bravely met the Danish vessels at the mouth of the river Exe, and in a short time the *second English victory at sea* was gallantly won. Peace was made, and the Danes gave King Alfred the pledges that he asked for, and then withdrew as far as Gloucester. <sup>5</sup>

**The King in the Swineherd's Hut.**—King Alfred's troubles were not yet over. His false enemies were as cunning as they were cruel. Having been joined by some new Danes who had sailed up the Severn to Gloucester, the perfidious Guthrum suddenly fell upon King Alfred in mid-winter. The English were surprised, so that they had no time to prepare for battle ; and the

fierce Danes were soon masters of the whole of Wessex. Some of the English took refuge in Wales, others in the Isle of Wight,<sup>6</sup> and a few sailed to the Continent. What did the king do?



ALFRED AND THE CAKES.

King Alfred did not lose heart. In Somerset, there were then many woods and marshes; and he resolved to

hide there with a few of his chief friends, so as to be safe from the Danes. There, in the midst of an extensive moorland, they chose an island, on which they hastily built a fort. And the place to this day, although it no longer has any marshes about it, is called *Athelney*,<sup>7</sup> which means 'Princes' Island.'

Bishop Asser tells us that King Alfred at one time was in such danger from the 'heathens,'<sup>8</sup> that he disguised himself as a poor countryman, and went to live with a swineherd. This man had formerly fought in the king's army against the Danes, and Alfred and his friends knew that he could be trusted, but they warned him not to tell his wife.

So one day, when Alfred had come into the hut, the swineherd's wife told him to watch some cakes of bread which she had placed on the hearth. She then went to attend to some of her other duties; and Alfred, being busy with some of his hunting gear,<sup>9</sup> or perhaps thinking of something more important than cakes, forgot all about the honest woman's orders. When she came back, she found her bread smoking and burning, while her guest sat quietly by as if nothing were the matter! No need to tell you how she scolded him. She said he was an idle, stupid fellow; reminding him that he would be glad enough to eat the cakes, although he hadn't sense enough to turn them.

"This unlucky woman," says the good Bishop (who may often have heard the story told by his royal master himself), "little thought she was talking to the King Alfred."

1. Wilton was at one time the chief town of Wessex, and gave its name to the county of Wilts.

2. This was said by the Danes to be the most solemn and binding of all oaths. Alfred,

however, made the 'truce-breakers' swear also upon some Christian relics.

3. Winchester, in Hampshire, the 'Venta Belgarum' of the Romans, was the capital of England up to the year 1156. It stands



- in the fertile valley of the Itchen, about eleven miles north of Southampton.
4. **Exeter**, a cathedral city on the river Exe in Devonshire.
  5. **Gloucester**, the 'Glevum' of the Romans, on the left bank of the Severn.
  6. **Isle of Wight**, the 'Garden of England,' is extremely beautiful and fertile. It is separated from the mainland by the Solent and Spithead. Osborne, near Cowes, is a favourite residence of the Queen.
  7. **Athelney**, in Somersetshire, at the junction of the Tone and the Parret. The affix *ey* means island, and is also used in many other names of islands, such as Sheppey (Sheep's Island), Orkney (Whales' Island), &c.
  8. **Heathen**, literally 'dwellers in the *heath*.' The synonymous word, **Pagan**, literally means 'dwellers in the *villages*.' The outlying villages and districts were the last to embrace Christianity.
  9. **Gear**, literally that which has been *prepared* for any purpose, here means weapons.

### A PRINCE LIVING AS A PEASANT.

**M**ETHINKS it were a happy life,  
 To be no better than a homely swain,<sup>1</sup>  
 To sit upon a hill as I do now,  
 To carve out dials<sup>2</sup> quaintly, point by point,  
 Thereby to see the minutes how they run,  
 How many make the hour full complete,  
 How many hours bring about the day,  
 How many days will finish up the year,  
 How many years a mortal man may live.  
 So minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years,  
 Passed over to the end they are created,  
 Would bring white hairs to a quiet grave.  
 Ah, what a life were this; how sweet, how lovely!  
 Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade  
 To shepherds looking on their silly<sup>3</sup> sheep,  
 Than doth a rich-embroidered canopy<sup>4</sup>  
 To kings. that fear their subjects' treachery!

1. **Swain**, literally a servant, labourer.

2. **Dials**, sun-dials were used for marking the time of the day before the invention of watches.

3. **Silly**, innocent, happy, harmless.

4. **Canopy**, literally a curtain for keeping off gnats or mosquitoes; here means a covering.



## KING ALFRED CONQUERS THE DANES, AND FOUNDS A GREAT KINGDOM.

**K**ING ALFRED, when in his fort at Athelney, was quietly preparing to make another attempt to drive the Danes from Wessex; and in a few months, he ordered all his thanes to gather their men round his standard. At that moment, the glad news was brought to Athelney that the English in Devon had risen against an army of Danes who had just landed there, and had killed eight hundred and forty of them, including their chief, *Hubba*.

The messenger from Devon also told Alfred that the Danish 'Raven' had been taken, and this also was good news to many of the English. This 'Raven' was a famous banner, said to have magical<sup>1</sup> powers, and believed to bring victory to the Danes, because it had been worked by the hands of the famous King Lodbrog's daughters. Lodbrog,<sup>2</sup> as you may remember, was the fierce Danish chief who was put to death by the English of Northumbria; and whose cruel



ALFRED'S JEWEL, found in the Isle of Athelney. The inscription means, 'Alfred had me wrought.'

fate the Danes often said they were avenging, when they plundered and slaughtered the English.

So King Alfred and his thanes, and all the brave Englishmen they could find, gathered together at 'Egbert's Stone' near the forest of Selwood.<sup>3</sup> Many who met there did not know it was the king who had summoned them; and it is said there was great joy in the army at the sight of Alfred, whom some had thought to be dead. They were eager to fight again under their king, and marched with such readiness and quickness, that Guthrum and his people were taken by surprise and completely beaten. Thus the English gained the famous battle of *Ethandune*.<sup>4</sup> It was fought only a short distance from the place of Alfred's defeat five months before.

Whoever goes to see the field where this great victory of Alfred's was won will also see a figure of a huge white horse on the side of a hill near the spot, which some say was cut in remembrance of this battle.

After this defeat, King Guthrum agreed to lead all the Danes out of Wessex, and also to become a Christian. This agreement between Alfred and Guthrum is called the treaty of *Wedmore*,<sup>5</sup> because Alfred had a palace there, and his Witan<sup>6</sup> (or Wise Men) met him there to settle what part of England the Danes should keep to themselves.

Alfred was now to rule over all Wessex, London, and the south of Mercia. The river Lea,<sup>7</sup> on the east of London, was to be the boundary between Guthrum's kingdom and the English. Another boundary was a line going from the Lea north-west towards Chester by the old Roman way called *Watling Street*.<sup>8</sup>

**King Alfred Finds a Great Kingdom.**—Now that the Danes no longer dared to molest the English of Wessex, King Alfred began to improve his kingdom,

with such wisdom and energy that he may well be called one of the founders of the nation's greatness.

He now built a much stronger fleet. We are told that his ships were twice the size of those of the Danes, and sailed more swiftly and steadily. One writer boasts that they had sixty oars or more; from which you can see that the war-ships at that time were still somewhat like the galleys in which Cæsar's soldiers had rowed over from Gaul more than nine hundred years earlier.

Having secured peace, as the principal condition for the happiness of a free people, Alfred resolved to have good government everywhere. There had been a code of laws in Wessex drawn up by *Ina*<sup>9</sup> and another by *Offa*<sup>10</sup> of Mercia; but Alfred made a new code, choosing what was best from those two and adding new laws of his own. But what was more important, King Alfred saw that the law was kept and respected; and, for that purpose; he chose the best men he could find to assist him in the work of government and in administering justice.

Another proof of the wisdom of this great king was his strong desire that every youth "abide at his book"<sup>11</sup> till he can well understand English writing." That this desire was earnest, we know from his efforts to secure for his people the great boon of education, so that all might read and think for themselves. He not only founded several schools (one of which he constantly visited to see how the work of teaching progressed), but he wrote many books for his people in their own language. King Alfred may thus be called the great founder of our English literature, which is thus older than that of the French or Germans.

This great king was untiring in his efforts to acquire knowledge and convey it to his people. He sent an

intelligent whale-fisher to visit the north of Russia, and an English sailor to the Baltic, so that he might know and write about the geography of northern Europe. He sent an embassy<sup>12</sup> to Jerusalem, and received from the Patriarch<sup>13</sup> several presents of great value; and another mission even to Hindustan, whence some splendid jewels and other costly things were brought him. He invited many scholars from France and other countries to help him in writing books and teaching his people.

But since we have called him the founder of our written language, perhaps you will ask what books he wrote. One was a history and geography of the world; another was a history of England;<sup>14</sup> a third was a book on philosophy, which was such a favourite with King Alfred that we are told he always carried it about with him. The following lesson is taken from that book, and may serve as a specimen of the English written by Alfred the Great.<sup>15</sup> Some of the old-fashioned words have been changed.

1. **Magical**, i.e., supernatural; derived from the *Magi*, the wise men of Persia.

2. **Lodbrog**, see page 91.

3. **Belwood Forest** is in Wilts.

4. **Ethandune**, supposed to be Edington in Devon.

5. **Wedmore**, in Somerset.

6. The **Witan** were the 'wise men whom all the early English kings consulted. They always had great power, and sometimes took the crown from their king to put another in his place. The *Witena-gemote*, or Wise Men's Meeting, as their council or assembly was called, was therefore a sort of Parliament. At first all freemen might attend, but afterwards the Witan were mainly the nobles, and, by and by, the bishops and abbots.

7. **Lea**, one of the northern tributaries of the Thames; enters the Thames at Blackwall; divides Middlesex from Essex.

8. **Watling Street**, see map, page 22. Robert of Gloucester thus gives the chief Roman roads—

'Fram the South into the North takith *Erminge-strete*.

'Fram the East into the West goeth *Ikeneld-strete*.

'Fram Dover into Chestre goeth *Watlyng-strete*.

'Fram the South-west to North-east into Englonde ende.

'*Fosse* men callith *thilke* wey that by mony town doth wend.'

9. **Ina** of Wessex, see page 87.

10. **Offa** of Mercia, see page 85.

11. **Book**. The word *book* is derived from the Saxon *boc*, Danish *bog*, the beech-tree; the Saxons first wrote on beechen boards. Cf. *paper* from *papyrus*, an Egyptian reed.

12. **Embassy**, a mission from one court to another.

13. **Patriarch**. One of the five great bishops of the early Christian Church was the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

14. Alfred's History and Geography of the World was mostly a translation of the 'History of the World on Christian Principles,' by Orosius. His History of England was translated from Bede's 'History of the Anglo-Saxon Church. His favourite book of philosophy he translated from 'Consolations of Philosophy,' by Boethius.

15. The vigour of Alfred's style and the freshness of his thoughts prove him to have been the greatest of Saxon writers.



KING ALFRED WRITING THE STORY OF ORPHEUS.

**THE STORY OF ORPHEUS.<sup>1</sup>**

BY KING ALFRED.

ONCE there was a harper in the country hight<sup>2</sup> Thrace,<sup>3</sup> which was in Greece. His name was Orpheus. He had a very excellent wife who was called Eurydicē. Then began men to say of this harper that he could harp so that the wood moved and that the stones stirred themselves at the sound, and wild beasts would run

thereto and stand as if they were tame; so still that, though men or hounds pursued them, they shunned them not.

Then men said that the harper's wife died, and her soul was led to Hades<sup>4</sup> (the unseen world). Then the harper became so sorrowful that he stayed in the woods and the mountains, both day and night, weeping and harping. Then it seemed to the harper that he desired nothing in this world, and he thought he would seek the gods of Hades, and begin to soften them with his harp, and pray that they would give him back his wife.

When he came thither, there was first the dog of Hades<sup>5</sup> with three heads, who began to wag his tail and play with him for his harping; and then a very dreadful gate-keeper, called Caron;<sup>6</sup> and then the grim goddesses, called the Fates,<sup>7</sup> who punish every man according to his deserts. Then Orpheus went farther, and all the people of Hades went towards him, and led him to their king, and began all to speak with him, and to pray that which he prayed. And all the punishments of the people of Hades were stayed while Orpheus harped before the king; and, when he long and long had harped, then spoke the king to the people, "Let us give the man his wife, for he has earned her by harping." He then told Orpheus to beware of looking back when leaving Hades, and said that if he looked backwards he should lose his wife.

Well, away! who can restrain love? Orpheus led his wife with him till he came to the boundary of light and darkness, and then his wife went after him. When he came forth into the light, he looked backwards towards his wife. Then was she at once lost to him for ever.

This story teaches every man who wishes to fly the

darkness and to come to the light of the true good that he look not to his old vices to practise them again.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The book begins with these words:—"Alfred, King, was translator of this book, and turned it from book Latin into English, as it now is done."</li> <li>2. <b>Hight</b>, called or named.</li> <li>3. <b>Thrace</b>, the modern Roumella in Turkey.</li> <li>4. <b>Hades</b>, literally means 'the unseen.' The name was given by the Greeks to the god of the unseen world. It subsequently came to be used for the place of the dead.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <b>Dog of Hades</b>, called Cerberus. It allowed the 'shades' of the dead to enter Hades, but never let them out again.</li> <li>6. <b>Charon</b>, or Charon, usually described as the boatman who 'ferried' the dead over the river Styx to Hades.</li> <li>7. <b>The Fates</b>, the old Greeks said, were three sisters, one of whom spun the thread of each man's life, the second drew it out, and the third cut it.</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

## STORIES ABOUT ALFRED THE GREAT.

**T**HIS good king was so much admired, that many stories were told long after his death to show how unselfish he was, how industrious (more than almost any man we know), and how brave in resisting the enemies of his country and securing his people's freedom and peace.

One day in the Isle<sup>1</sup> of Athelney, when all King Alfred's people were gone out to fish in the marshes except himself and his wife and one servant, there came a pilgrim<sup>2</sup> to beg for something to eat. And when the servant said there was only one loaf of bread in the house and a little wine, the king said, "Give the poor pilgrim half of the loaf and half of the wine." The pilgrim thanked the king very humbly, and prayed God to bless him and his house. But afterwards the servant found the loaf whole and the wine bottle just as it had been before he gave some to the pilgrim; and when he told this strange thing to the king, they began also to wonder how the pilgrim could have come to the island without a boat.

When night had come and all were gone to bed, the



king lay awake, and presently a wonderful light filled all the place, and he saw a venerable old man like a priest holding a most beautiful book of the Gospels.

The old man blessed the king and said, "I am called Cuthbert, the soldier of Christ, and it was to me that thou showedst such charity this morning. Therefore be strong and of good courage and of a joyful heart, for thou shalt soon fight against thine enemies, and doubt not that thou shalt overcome them. God hath given thee this land and the kingdom of thy fathers, to thee and to thy sons, and to thy sons' sons, and to thy seed for ever."

Seven days after this wonderful vision, a large host of the English people gathered round King Alfred near Selwood, and they fought again under the 'Dragon' of Wessex at Ethandune.

As a proof of the courage of Alfred, men said that, when he stayed with his queen and their children in Athelney, he one day disguised himself as a poor strolling harper, and went among the Danes. He pretended to amuse them by his music and songs, but all the time learning much about them and about Guthrum's plans. Thus when the moment for action came, he was the better able to surprise and utterly defeat them.

All who know anything about Alfred the Great must wonder how he found time for so much work. He must really have toiled from year's end to year's end, morning, noon, and night.

Bishop Asser tells us that the king measured the time by candles, so as not to neglect any of his duties. He had wax candles made all of one size, so that six of them, burning one after another, would just last from sunrise to sunrise. Thus, instead of saying "two hours'

time," as we do, King Alfred would say, "half a candle's time;" and one hour with him over his books was "a quarter of a candle."

But English houses a thousand years ago were very queerly built, and the word "comfortable" was not yet known; so that even the king's palace had so many chinks and holes in the walls that Alfred found that his candles burnt too fast in windy weather. He therefore bethought him of putting his time-candle in a box or case made of four pieces of thin horn. The horn showed the light, while it saved the candle from flaring and wasting. Thus, according to the good Bishop, our royal genius was the inventor of horn-lanterns!<sup>3</sup>

1. *Isle*, derived from the Latin *insula*. The word *island* comes from the Saxon *ey-land*, that is, 'eye of land.'

2. *Pilgrim* (from the Latin *peregrinus*), literally, one who wanders *through the fields*.

3. *Horn-lanterns* were made by the Greeks and the Romans, but Alfred was probably the first to use them in England.

## KING ALFRED AND THE NEW DANES.

THOUGH Alfred had secured freedom and peace for the English, he had frequently to send his navy against new hordes of plundering Danes. One year his fleet took four Danish ships; and, in the year 885, no less than sixteen were captured in one sea-fight. In that same year, he gained another victory over some Danes, who had sailed up the Medway<sup>1</sup> and were trying to take the strong town of Rochester. Alfred bravely stormed the tower they had built, and quickly drove them in terror to their ships, in which they were glad to return to France.

During the next two years, while the Northmen or

Normans were trying to take Paris,<sup>2</sup> Alfred rebuilt London, and made it strong with walls and forts.

At last, a very large Danish fleet sailed over to re-attack Alfred and the English. Two hundred and fifty ships, full of armed men and horses, came to the south of Kent, while another strong fleet of eighty vessels sailed up the Thames. The latter was commanded by a daring chief called Hastings. This leader was a man of such vigour and military skill, that, but for precautions taken by King Alfred and the generalship he now displayed, all England must speedily have become Danish.

Near Rochester, Hastings built a very large stronghold overlooking the mouth of the Medway. When Alfred had collected the English, he divided his army into two parts—one half to stay at home, while the rest were on service. So that, in any campaign,<sup>3</sup> there was always a large reserve ready to assist those in the field.

The Danes had never seen such well-drilled and well-officered soldiers, and soon confessed that the English were more than a match for them. Alfred completely defeated both armies in Kent; afterwards the English had a third victory in Surrey, and then a fourth in Essex over those who had crossed the Thames, hoping to be joined by their kinsmen there. Hurrying next as far west as Devon, Alfred drove another Danish army from Exeter to their ships with great loss. Some time after, Hastings suffered another terrible defeat on the Severn.

The last attempt of this daring chief was to sail up the river Lea, and build a strong camp about twenty miles north of London. The English king went to see the Danish camp; and, as he looked at the enemy's ships covering the river, he devised a means of completely foiling Hastings. Bringing forward his men, he ordered



HASTINGS AND HIS DANES.

them to dig three deep channels from the Lea to the Thames; and very soon the Danes, to their woful disgust, saw all the ships on which they depended left aground and perfectly useless. In dismay, Hastings' army escaped from their strong camp by night. Soon after, the citizens of London took the grounded Danish ships; and, after destroying some of them, brought the rest down the Lea to London with great joy and rejoicing. Thus King Alfred saved England, and the daring Dane sailed back to France without either gain or glory.

**Close of King Alfred's Reign.**—When Hastings left England, Alfred and his people were at rest, and the last four years of the reign were passed in peace. You can easily imagine with what delight the royal scholar went back to his beloved books. With the help of his Witan or Wise Men, he still did much to prepare the way for his people to become a free and thoughtful and industrious nation. His own noble words are—“*It is just that the English should for ever remain as free as their own thoughts.*”

King Alfred, though he did so much work with such great energy, was frequently ill in health. He died in his fifty-third year, and was buried in the new Minster<sup>4</sup> which he had himself founded in Winchester, his capital. In recent years, strange to say, English hands have disturbed the resting-place of the Great Alfred, the best of English kings; but such men as Alfred need no monument. On how very few of all whose names are written in the history of mankind can we so justly bestow the triple crown of Virtue, Heroism, and Culture!

1. Medway, the last of the southern tributaries of the Thames, which it enters at Sheerness.

2. Paris, the capital of France, standing on the river Seine.

3. Campaign, a year's war: literally, the time during which an army fights in the open plain (Latin, *campus*).

4. Minster, contraction of *monasterium*, the church belonging to a monastery.

## THE SUCCESSORS OF ALFRED.

EDWARD THE ELDER AND ATHELSTAN.



ATHELSTAN.

THE successors of Alfred the Great for about a hundred years were nearly all brave and wise rulers. Alfred's son *Edward*, his grandson *Athelstan*, and his great-grandson *Edgar* the Peaceful, all brought great honour to the English name.

**Edward the Elder, 901-925.**—Edward the Elder had been with his father in Athelney, and fought by his side

in many battles against the Danes. When he came to the throne of Wessex, he was greatly assisted by his heroic sister, the Lady of Mercia, who commenced the great work of taking back from the Danes the "Five Boroughs"—*Derby*,<sup>1</sup> *Lincoln*,<sup>2</sup> *Leicester*,<sup>3</sup> *Stamford*,<sup>4</sup> and *Nottingham*.<sup>5</sup>

Ethelfled, this brave daughter of the great king, at her death left Mercia to King Edward, who, soon after, made himself master of East Anglia and of Essex. Thus at his death, in the year 925, Alfred's son was "King of the English" as far north as the Humber; he was called "Lord of all Britain," because the princes of Wales, Northumbria, and Scotland owned him as their "Over-lord."

In his reign, a number of wild Danes or Northmen settled in France, on the banks of the Seine. Their

leader was a tall warrior, *Rolf* or *Rollo*, nicknamed the 'Ganger.' The horses of Norway (like the ponies of Shetland) were not high enough for Rollo's long legs, and so he had to 'gang' or walk, whilst others rode.

The king of the Franks had been so much troubled with the Northmen, that he was glad to cede one of his northern provinces to them, and even to give Rolf his daughter in marriage. The territory thus obtained by



ATHELSTAN ON THE FIELD OF BRUNANBURGH.

the Normans was called *Normandy*; and Rolf's town, *Rouen*,<sup>6</sup> is still the capital of that large province. Rolf and his Normans ought to be mentioned here, because, one hundred and fifty years afterwards, their descendants invaded and conquered England.

**Athelstan, called 'Emperor,' 925-941.**—After Edward's death, *Athelstan*,<sup>7</sup> Alfred's favourite grandson,

became king. When the little prince was a handsome fair-haired boy, Alfred one day clad him in a cloak of purple, and buckled round his waist a jewelled belt with a sword in a golden sheath. Afterwards, we are told, he was sent to his aunt Ethelfled, the brave Lady of Mercia.

When Athelstan was king, he increased more and more the power of the English. He not only became master of Northumbria, but he subdued Wales and also the wild tribes of Devon and Cornwall. His most famous victory was on the bloody field of *Brunanburgh*,<sup>8</sup> where he defeated a large army of Danes, Scots, Welsh, and Irish. An old ballad tells how five Danish kings, seven earls, and the son of the king of Scots, were there slain by the English; and never afterwards was Athelstan obliged to draw the sword.

So great had Alfred's kingdom now become that Athelstan was much respected in foreign countries, and his sisters were married to the greatest princes in Europe.

1. **Derby**, stands on the river Derwent, a tributary of the Trent.

2. **Lincoln**, a cathedral city on the Witham.

3. **Leicester**, on the river Soar, an affluent of the Trent.

4. **Stamford**, on the Welland, on the boundary between Lincoln and Northampton.

5. **Nottingham**, on the Trent. The 'Five Boroughs' formed a Danish league for mutual protection.

6. **Rouen**, on the Seine, capital of Normandy.

7. **Athelstan**, i.e., the noble or precious stone.

8. The battle was probably fought south of the Humber, in Lincolnshire.





## THE SUCCESSORS OF ALFRED—*Continued.*

EDMUND, EDRED, EDWY, AND EDGAR.



EDGAR.

**A**THELSTAN was succeeded by his two younger brothers *Edmund* and *Edred*; after whom his two grandsons, *Edwy* and *Edgar*, filled the throne.

**Edmund, 941-946.**—Athelstan's brother *Edmund*, like all his race, had much fighting to test his manhood. He won back the "Five Boroughs" from the Danes; and had also to fight for the

mastership of Northumbria.

His reign, however, came to a very sudden end; for one night, when feasting in a hall at Puckle-church,<sup>1</sup> his eye fell upon a man among the company whom, at the beginning of his reign, he had banished for robbery. When the man refused to leave, the king, in his passion, caught him by the hair and threw him to the ground. Next moment he himself fell, stabbed to the heart by the outlaw's dagger.

**Edred, 946-955.**—*Edred*, the next brother of Athelstan, was crowned in the year 946. Though weak in body, he had much of the strong and active will of his family. He went to Northumbria to punish the rebel Danes, and regained that province.

The most important man at this time was not a king

or warrior, but a priest called *Dunstan*. Born and taught at *Glastonbury*,<sup>2</sup> where he afterwards was made abbot, he in due time rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury and the chief statesman of that age.

When a boy he was extremely quick at his lessons, and soon became proficient in all the learning of the time. He also gave himself to the study of music, drawing, and other accomplishments; and, at last, showed a knowledge and skill so much beyond what was then common that many said the little abbot must be a sorcerer.<sup>3</sup> Dunstan had great power in England, not only under Edmund and Edred but also under the three following kings.

**Edwy, 955-959.**—*Edwy*, the son of Edmund, had not a happy reign, partly from quarrels between the English of the south and the Danes of the north, but mainly from the keen disputes between the regular monks and the ordinary clergy.

Abbot Dunstan said that the clergy ought not to marry; and King Edwy, who hated the monks, took the part of the clergymen against Dunstan. Then, when the king married his cousin *Elgiva*, both Dunstan and Archbishop Odo took great offence; and at last the young king banished Dunstan from England.

**Edgar, 959-975.**—Edwy was succeeded by his brother *Edgar*, a much greater king. He is called the 'Peaceful,' because there was no fighting in his reign, not even with the Danes.

One year, it is true, he went to Wales to compel the chief or prince to yield him the tribute which had been paid since the reign of Athelstan. According to one account, King Edgar ordered the Welsh prince to bring three hundred wolves'<sup>4</sup> heads every year, instead of

paying money ; and that, in the fourth year, the prince told Edgar there were no more to kill.

Edgar, being a worthy great-grandson of King Alfred, had a large fleet to guard the English coasts, and often sailed with it himself. He also visited the chief towns in his kingdom to see that the laws were observed and that justice was done. On these journeys, he was usually accompanied by his chief minister,<sup>5</sup> Dunstan, whom he had already made Archbishop of Canterbury.

So great in power did Edgar become that he was



EDGAR ON THE DEE.

called "King of the English and all the nations round about," and also "Ruler of the whole Isle of Albion."

It is said that when he visited Chester,<sup>6</sup> eight kings came to do him homage ; and, as if they were his servants, they rowed him in his royal barge on the river Dee. One of the eight kings was Kenneth<sup>7</sup> of Scotland. Now the king of England was but a small man, though nimble and active. One night, at a feast, Kenneth said, "How is it that all of us, so many kings as we are,

should serve this one man who is smaller than any of us ? ”

When this came to Edgar's ears, he said nothing ; but soon afterwards he asked King Kenneth to come apart to a certain wood. Then, taking out two swords, he said to Kenneth, “ Now choose one of these swords, and let us see at once which is the better man : fight me and beat me if you can.” But the king of the Scots would not draw his sword against his lord the king of all Britain ; and said that he had only spoken in jest, because his heart was merry with feasting. So King Edgar and King Kenneth remained friends.

Though Edgar was so famous in his time, he was only thirty-two years of age when he died. He was interred at Glastonbury, where also the abbot Dunstan had buried King Edmund, his father.

1. **Puckle-church**, in Gloucestershire, about six miles east of Bristol.

2. **Glastonbury**, in Somerset, five miles south of Wells.

3. **Sorcerer**, literally *one who draws lots* ; a magician.

4. **Wolves**, see note 8, page 12.

5. **Minister**, literally one who is *less*, therefore a servant. Here it means the adviser of the king.

6. **Chester**, a cathedral city on the river Dee,

7. **Kenneth** reigned from 973 to 987.



SAXON SOLDIERS.



THE DEATH OF EDWARD THE MARTYR.

## V. THE DANISH CONQUEST.

### THE OVERTHROW OF THE SAXONS.



EDWARD THE MARTYR.

**THE Two Sons of Edgar.**—

By his first wife the great Edgar had a son called *Edward*, and by his second wife a son called *Ethelred*. Both sons came to wear the crown, but neither of them proved himself worthy of being counted in the royal line of Alfred, Athelstan, and Edgar.

Edward was king for only four years; and his death was so sad and cruel, that he was ever afterwards called Edward the Martyr.

His stepmother, *Elfrida*, was very anxious that her son *Ethelred* should be king. She was staying in *Corfe Castle*,<sup>1</sup> near the south coast of Dorset. One day, when *Edward* was hunting in a wood near the castle, he rode to the gate and asked to see his brother *Ethelred*.

The wicked *Elfrida*, according to the story, gave a secret order to one of her servants. As the young king sat in the saddle and was about to drink a cup of wine which she brought him, he was stabbed in the back with a dagger. He at once galloped away, but soon sank from loss of blood; his foot caught in the stirrup, and he was dragged along the ground till he died. His disfigured body was buried in a town close by.

Thus it was that *Ethelred* became king. His whole reign was a time of wretchedness and strife, thirty-seven years of crime and blunder. *Ethelred*, the brother of *Alfred*, had been brave and noble; but this *Ethelred*, called the Unready, was not only false and cruel like his mother, but he was cowardly and weak-minded.



ETHELRED.

The Danes soon began to re-attack the English, and within a few months they sacked the three cities of *Southampton*,<sup>2</sup> *Chester*, and *London*. To get rid of these invaders, *Ethelred* paid them ten thousand pounds of silver; and, in order to raise the money, he forced his people to pay a heavy tax called *Danegeld*.<sup>3</sup>

The Danish pirates came again and again; till at last the foolish king gave orders that, on a particular night,<sup>4</sup> all the Danes throughout England were to be murdered. Thus, in the year 1002, on the 13th of November,

thousands of people, many of them peaceable citizens, were suddenly put to death. Amongst those who were so ruthlessly murdered was the sister of Sweyn, the king of Denmark.

**Sweyn the Fork-Beard.**—King Sweyn took a terrible oath that he would be revenged upon the murderers of his sister. With the largest invading fleet that had yet been seen, he landed on the coast of Devon. For four years the Danes plundered and slaughtered the English, and burnt every town and homestead<sup>5</sup> they came to.

Even after Sweyn withdrew, on receiving a heavy bribe, fresh bands of his vengeful countrymen came. Some went to Canterbury; and, among a large number of other captives, they carried off the old archbishop.

The old man was too poor to give them the gold they wanted for his ransom; and, when he refused to raise the money from his people, some of the drunken Danes pelted him with stones and ox-bones till he fell down. One pirate, more merciful than the rest, struck him on the head with a battle-axe. To this day the oldest parish church of Greenwich<sup>6</sup> is named St. Alphege, after this old archbishop whom the Danes murdered.

Some years after Sweyn landed again, and was soon master of all the country which had been held by the Danes in the time of Alfred the Great. He crossed Mercia, burning and slaughtering everywhere. The English people had now no leader as they had in former days, and the only determined stand made against Sweyn was by the men of London.

Thus it was that a Dane came to be crowned king of England, even London at last receiving him. The weak Ethelred fled to Normandy, because his second wife was the Duke's sister. Three weeks after his coronation, Sweyn was dead.

**Edmund Ironside, 1017.**—Ethelred's eldest son, *Edmund*, was a much braver man than his father. He fought six battles with *Cnut* or *Canute*, the son of the fierce *Sweyn*. Finally, they agreed to divide England between them—Edmund's share being all the country south of the *Thames*, with *London* and *East Anglia*. The English gave Edmund the name '*Ironside*,'<sup>7</sup> on account of his great strength and courage. He reigned only seven months; and his people said that, if he had lived longer, he would have regained the kingdom of his grandfather, *Edgar*.

1. **Corfe Castle**, in the Isle of Purbeck in the south-east of Dorset.

2. **Southampton**, on the coast of Hampshire, now one of the most important of the Channel ports.

3. **Danegeld**, i.e., 'Dane-money' or 'Dane-gold.'

4. **The Festival of St. Brice**, a Danish saint.

5. **Homestead**, the place of a home or house. Cf. *in-stead*, i.e., in the place of.

6. **Greenwich**, in Kent, on the south bank of the *Thames*.

7. **Edmund Ironside** met *Cnut* at *Olney*, an island in the *Severn*. Some say they fought a duel.

## THE DANISH KINGS OF ENGLAND.



CNUT.

**CNUT, 1017-1035.**—*Cnut* (or *Canute*) the Dane, being now king of the English, ruled them firmly but not unjustly. He was also king of *Denmark*, *Norway*, and part of *Sweden*, and governed his territories so wisely that he is rightly called *Cnut the Great*.

One cruel action at the beginning of his reign was to send the two infant boys of *Edmund Ironside* to *Sweden* to be murdered there. They, however, escaped to *Hungary*; and one of them,



Edward, who married the German emperor's daughter, was father of *Edgar Atheling*<sup>1</sup> and *Margaret*<sup>2</sup>—both important names in our early history.



CNUT AT THE SEA-SHORE.

Cnut loved England more than Denmark or Norway, and in order to govern it better he divided it into four

great provinces or earldoms—Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, and Wessex. The most famous of his earls was *Godwin*,<sup>8</sup> who was made earl of the West Saxons in 1020. He rose to be the greatest man in England, and became the father of an English king.

**Stories of Cnut.**—Once, so the story runs, Cnut was sailing with his queen to the church of Ely. He listened to the chanting of the monks as they sang in the Abbey, and was so pleased, it is said, that he made a poem on it, which ran thus—

“Merry sung the monks within Ely  
When Cnut the king rowed thereby,  
Row, my knights, row near the land,  
And hear we these monks’ song.”

Who has not heard the story of King Cnut and the courtiers? One day he was walking on the shore with some of them; and when they spoke about his power and greatness, he told one to place a chair on the beach near the advancing waves. Then ordering the sea not to dare to approach, since he was its lord and master, Cnut sat on the chair till the water dashed all round him.

Thus he showed his companions the folly of their words of flattery: “Ye see how powerless my word is; a king, like any other man, is but weak before nature and before God. Therefore honour God only, since it is He alone that all things obey.”

After this, Cnut never wore his crown, but placed it in the cathedral of Winchester over an image of our Lord.

**The Two Sons of Cnut.**—Two sons of Cnut succeeded him as kings of England. His eldest son, *Sweyn*,

became king of Norway. By his father's will *Hardicnut* was to be king of England, while the second



HAROLD.

son *Harold* was to get Denmark. But Harold seized England. The Witan decreed that he should govern London and the country north of the Thames, while Wessex was reserved for Hardicnut. The latter lingered in Denmark, leaving his English territory to be ruled by Earl Godwin.

Harold was very fond of hunting, and from his speed in running he got the name of "*Hare-foot*." After a short reign of four years, he died at Oxford in 1040.

The last of the Danish kings was *Hardicnut*; and like his brother, Harold Hare-foot, he was not worthy to



HARDICNUT.

wear the crown of Cnut. He caused his brother's body to be dug up and beheaded, and then ordered the headless corpse to be thrown into a marsh. To this day there is a church in London, near Temple Bar, called St. Clement Danes; and its name may help you to remember that it was in the churchyard there that Harold's body was buried by some of his Danish friends.

Hardicnut's end was very ignoble and unkingly. There was a Danish thane called *Clapa*, whose daughter was going to be married. At the marriage feast the

king ate and drank too much ; and at last, as he rose to pledge the bride, suddenly fell speechless with the wine-cup in his hand.

He had been king but two years. The place where he died is still called Clapham, that is, the house of Clapa.

1. **Edgar Atheling**, that is, Edgar 'the Prince,' as he was fondly called by the Saxons, who regarded him as the rightful heir to the English throne.
2. **Margaret**, married Malcolm Canmore King of Scotland. Her daughter Maud married Henry I of England. Thus Henry II. was her great-grandson.
3. **Godwin** was at first a cowherd, living with his old father Wulfnoth in a small hut in a

forest. A Danish noble, having lost his way, begged Godwin's aid, which was readily given ; and the Dane in return obtained for Godwin a post in Cnut's army. During a war in Sweden, Godwin, at the head of the Saxon troops, routed the enemy. After this, his advance was rapid. He married Cnut's sister Githa, and received the earldoms of Kent and Wessex. His son Harold eventually became king.

## VI. THE ENGLISH RESTORATION.

### AN ENGLISH KING AGAIN ON THE THRONE.



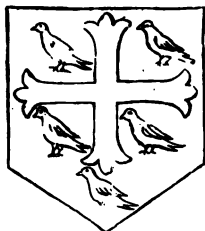
EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

**A**FTER having four Danish kings, the English people were glad to be ruled once more by a prince of the house of Alfred. You may remember how Ethelred the Unready married the sister of the Duke of Normandy, and how he went with her there to escape the Danes.

Their son *Edward*, the new king, was unhappily much more of a Frenchman than an Englishman. Not only was his mother a Frenchwoman ; but, having since his boyhood lived in Normandy, he talked nothing but French. Thus he had

come to like the French people better than the English, and therefore brought many of them to England. He was very friendly with his cousin, Duke William of Normandy; and that subsequently led to one of the greatest events in the whole history of England.

Edward was more like a gentle priest than a powerful king; and, after his death, he was called 'the Confessor.' *Godwin*, the great Englishman whom King Cnut had made an earl, had much power over Edward, and his daughter *Edith* became queen. But the French



ARMS OF EDWARD THE  
CONFESSOR

favourites of the king, and the other earls, became jealous of Godwin, and at last forced him to leave England.

A haughty French count had been on a visit to Edward; and, when passing through Dover<sup>1</sup> on his way back to Normandy, his followers were so insolent that the citizens drove them out of the town. When the count told the king, putting all the blame on the men of Dover, Edward ordered Godwin to punish the people, but the earl stoutly refused. He even gathered an army to force the king to expel his French favourites; but when the other earls joined Edward and his Frenchmen, Godwin was compelled to sail over to Flanders and leave his large estates in England.

When the great earl was away, the kingdom was entirely ruled by Frenchmen. This was the time, too, when Edward's cousin, the famous Duke William of Normandy, came over to see him. The weak king is said to have promised William that he should succeed to the English crown. The Duke was very ambitious<sup>2</sup> and daring; and, seeing so many Normans at his cousin's court, he

thought that it would be easy to become king of England.

**Earl Godwin and his Son.**—In the following year, Godwin came back to England and checked the influence of the French courtiers. The earl and his son *Harold*, having again become friends with the king, got back their estates and honours, and were now the real rulers of the country. In the year 1053, when dining with King Edward at Winchester, Earl Godwin died suddenly. A few days afterwards he was buried in the cathedral there, near the royal tombs of Alfred and Cnut.

Harold, the earl of Wessex, was now all-powerful in the country. The king occasionally went out hunting, but he spent nearly all his time in prayer, reading pious books, collecting relics,<sup>3</sup> and building churches. No doubt he was glad to have a great ruler like Harold to manage his kingdom for him.

Harold won much honour from his victories over the Welsh, and their king and princes were glad to pay tribute to him. But, during this time, England itself was at peace and became more wealthy and prosperous.

A curious adventure is said to have happened to the great earl. When he was cruising in the English Channel, a storm arose and his boat was wrecked on the French coast. Count Guy,<sup>4</sup> the lord of the country, put him in prison and demanded a heavy ransom.

William, Duke of Normandy, having heard of this, soon made Count Guy give up his prisoner. He then took the English earl to his court, and treated him with the greatest honour and kindness. It is said that Harold assisted Duke William in fighting against the Bretons; and that once, when a number of Normans were being swept away in a rapid river, the strong-armed English

earl pulled them out two at a time! Harold, it is also said, promised to marry the duke's daughter, and took an oath to support William's claim to the English throne on the death of Edward.

In the year 1066 the Confessor died, and was buried in his own newly-built church, now the famous Abbey of Westminster.

1. Dover was under Godwin's jurisdiction as Earl of Kent.

2. *Ambitious*, literally, *going about* to canvass for office: the word came to be applied to one desirous of power.

3. *Relics*, the bones or other remains of saints. Even clothing and other articles worn or used by saints were considered sacred.

4. *Guy* was Count of Ponthieu and a vassal of the Duke of Normandy.

## THE LAST OF THE OLD ENGLISH KINGS.



HAROLD.

**H**AROLD, the son of Godwin, had already for twelve years ruled England well; and it was no wonder he was chosen king on the death of Edward the Confessor. His father being an Englishman, and his mother the daughter of a Danish earl, King Harold was a type of the union of the English and the Dane—a proof that both peoples were now finally blended into one strong race and nation. This united people chose Harold to be their king, not because he had royal blood in his veins, but because he was the most worthy to wield the sceptre<sup>1</sup> and wear the crown.

Great trouble, however, was brewing for the English people and their new king. Harold had two strong and terrible enemies, who were both preparing to attack him.

One was his own brother, Earl *Tostig*, who had been expelled from his earldom of Northumbria for misgovernment.

The other was the ambitious Duke William of Normandy, who had lately pretended such friendship for Harold. William and his knights were famous warriors, but Harold and the English were more than a match for them in bravery; and had there been nothing else, there is little doubt that the Frenchmen, for all their fine armour, would soon have been glad to get back to Normandy.

Duke William was very cunning, and led nearly everybody to believe that Harold had no right to be king of England. Then he made great preparations to assert his claim; while King Harold, in the meantime, posted troops in different parts along the south coast. Months were spent in this way, but William was not yet ready; and, at last, Harold sent his great army back again to their farms and towns.

Then came the news to King Harold that an army from Denmark and Norway had landed in the north, and was laying waste the country as far as the city of York. The English forces were again brought together, and Harold led them from London to York as fast as they could march; and though the Northmen under Earl *Tostig* and the king of Norway fought fiercely, they were completely beaten and both their leaders slain.

Such was Harold's victory at *Stamford Bridge*.<sup>2</sup> It was a famous fight, and in one of the old ballads the story is told as follows:—

—*The Battle at the Bridge*.—Once there came across the sea, with a great army, *Hardrada*<sup>3</sup> the tall king of Norway, and Earl *Tostig* the brother of King Harold of



England. They sailed up the river Ouse<sup>4</sup> towards the city of York,<sup>5</sup> and afterwards went to take the castle at Stamford Bridge.

At night, Hardrada and his army slept in their ships on the river; and, in the morning, they went on shore to march to the city of York. As they came near they saw a great dust rising, and soon after they beheld the flash of arms and helmets and shields, shining in the sun; and were aware that Harold, king of the English, was already come against them. Earl Tostig thought the Northmen should go to their ships and fight from thence; but Hardrada said, "No, let us stay here and send to the ships for the rest of our men to come to our help—we can fight as manfully as those English."

So Hardrada set up his standard, the 'Land-Waster,' and placed his men in a circle with their shields firmly set together. But as he rode round his army his black horse stumbled, and King Hardrada fell to the ground.

Now Harold, the English king, saw him fall; and when some Danes who were with him told him that it was Hardrada himself who had fallen, Harold replied, "He is indeed a tall man and handsome, but his fall will bring him ill-luck."

Then rode twenty soldiers on horseback from King Harold's army, clad all over in armour, with a message to Earl Tostig, saying that, rather than fight with his own brother, King Harold would give him one-third of his kingdom if he would become again loyal. Then said Earl Tostig, "If my brother had spoken so fairly a year ago, there are many men now dead who would be still alive; but if I make peace with him, what will he give to my friend Hardrada, king of Norway, for all his trouble in coming so far?"

"King Harold will give him seven feet of English ground, or more perhaps, since he is taller than other men."

"Nay," said Tostig, "tell Harold your king to buckle him for battle; for we shall either die here as men, or win England for our own."

When the English horsemen<sup>6</sup> rode off, King Hardrada put on his armour, and prepared his men for the battle. And when the English came upon them, the Northmen kept them off with their spears and their wall of shields. At last the English seemed to give way, and some of the Northmen broke their shield-wall<sup>7</sup> to follow. Then the English turned fiercely upon the Northmen, and soon made a large breach in their shield-wall, and slew many of them. And their king, Hardrada, left his flag, the 'Land-Waster,' to fight with the foremost of his men, and slew many Englishmen with his two-handed sword, till he was shot in the throat by an arrow.

After him, Earl Tostig led the Northmen; and then, when the rest of their men came from the ships to help them, the fight became fiercer than ever. The Northmen refused to take quarter from the English, and were nearly all killed; and at last, when Tostig was slain, they fled, and left the victory to King Harold the son of Godwin.

1. *Sceptre*, originally a mere walking-staff used by old men; and as the father of the family was the ruler, the staff became the symbol of authority.

2. *Stamford Bridge*, on the river Derwent, a tributary of the Ouse, a few miles east of York. There is another 'Stamford' in Lincolnshire.

3. *Hardrada*, or *Hard-rede* (*stern in council*), was famous as a warrior, not only in the north of Europe, but also at Constantinople, and in Africa and Sicily. He fought against the Saracens in Syria and Egypt, and was thus the pioneer of the Crusaders.

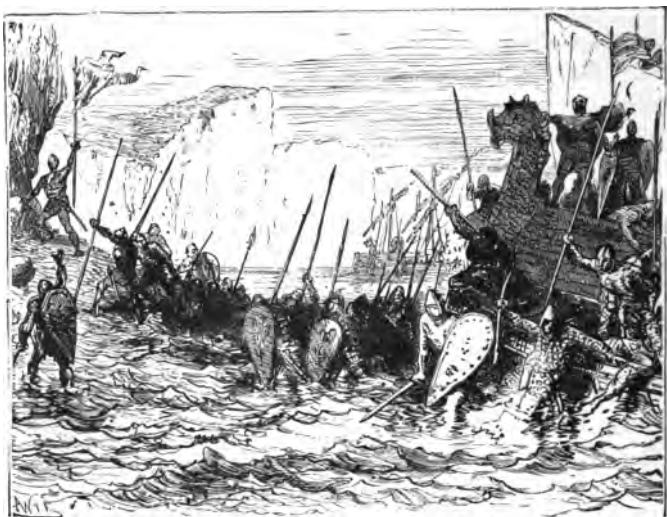
4. *Ouse*, in Yorkshire, falls into the Humber. It must not be mistaken for the *Great Ouse* of

the Fen district, the *Ouse* of Sussex, nor the *Little Ouse* of Norfolk. The word '*Ouse*' comes from the Old British *uisge*, which means 'water.' From the same root the names *Exe*, *Axe*, *Esk*, *Usk*, &c., are derived.

5. *York*, the 'metropolis of the north,' stands on the river Ouse, in the middle of a fertile plain. It is a very ancient city, and during the Roman period bore the name of *Eboracum*.

6. At that time the English never fought on horseback, but many had horses to ride to and from the fight.

7. *Shield-wall* formed by the shields overlapping each other in front, somewhat like slates in a roof. Or, the Roman '*tortoise*'



THE LANDING OF THE NORMANS.

### SENLAC AND ITS SEQUEL.

**K**ING HAROLD and his army were resting near York after the battle at Stamford Bridge, when a horseman arrived in hot haste from the south to say that he had seen the Normans land on the coast of Sussex, and had therefore ridden day and night to tell the tidings. This was indeed ill news to the king, but he was not at all dismayed. He only wished he had been in Sussex to prevent Duke William<sup>1</sup> from landing. He instantly sent to collect more men from all England, so that even before he reached London he had a very large army.

In a few days, his force was still more increased by the men from London, Kent, and other parts. The

English everywhere hated the Normans, and even churchmen wished to assist. The king's uncle, the abbot of Winchester, brother of Earl Godwin, came with twelve of his monks, wearing helmets and coats of mail.

On reaching *Senlac*, about seven miles from *Hastings*, Harold posted his army on a little hill and fenced it all round with wood as a barricade<sup>2</sup> or defence. The next morning, when the enemy was seen advancing to the attack, King Harold rode round his army, and told his men that if they kept their ranks and cut down their enemies as they came near the barricade, the day was won; but if they left their position, that they ran deadly risk from the mail-clad horsemen.

The Normans who came up from *Hastings*<sup>3</sup> to attack Harold were in three large divisions—each having archers and horse, besides heavy-armed foot-soldiers. Duke William commanded the centre; and with him rode his two brothers—one of them Bishop Odo, who, although a priest, had fought famously in many a fight. Both William and Odo bore heavy iron maces instead of swords.

Duke William's army attacked fiercely; but neither the foot-soldiers nor the horse could force the barricade, and many Frenchmen were cut down with sword or battle-axe. When the Norman duke saw that his soldiers were losing heart, he ordered some of them to pretend to run away. Thus the English were tempted to disobey Harold's order and left their strong position to chase the enemy; and that was one of the chief reasons why they lost the battle.

The Norman horsemen were now able to come closer; and, by and by, when the duke told his archers to shoot upwards so that their deadly arrows would fall on the

English from above, some of Harold's men began to lose ground. The English king himself still stood by his



EDITH SEARCHING FOR THE BODY OF HAROLD.

royal standard, the 'Golden Dragon'<sup>4</sup> of Wessex, till at last a deadly Norman arrow pierced his right eye. His

enemies saw him fall; and, with a loud shout of triumph, a group of William's knights rushed forward and succeeded in carrying off the 'Golden Dragon.' Meanwhile Harold's life had come to an end by "the most glorious of deaths, fighting for the land and the people he had loved so well."

**The Sequel of Senlac.**—Harold, the last of the old English kings, the hero who died on Senlac Hill, had formerly built a beautiful church at Waltham,<sup>5</sup> in Epping Forest; and, to this day, Waltham Holy Cross is admired by many people who never think of King Harold.

Two canons from Waltham followed their patron king to the battle, and when all was over asked leave from Duke William to carry Harold's body to Waltham Abbey. The Norman, however, refused; and it is said that he also denied the body to Harold's mother, though she offered to ransom it by paying its weight in gold.

✓ What, then, became of the body of this great English king? The victorious duke, it is said, told a knight in his army, who had known Harold, to carry his body to the sea-coast and raise a heap of stones over it: "For," said William, "he guarded the shore well when living, let him guard it now that he is dead."

But it was difficult to find the body of the king. The priests of Waltham looked long amongst the slain, till at last Edith, "the swan-necked," who had known Harold well and loved him before he became king, found it beneath a heap of his slain friends. Then the body was carried by the two canons and the Norman knight to the sea-shore near Hastings, and many came to place a stone on the king's cairn.

At last, however, when the Norman duke was safely

seated on the throne, he allowed the body of Harold to be removed to Waltham; and there, in his own Church of the Holy Cross, the hero-king was finally laid to rest.

1. **William** landed on the shore of Pevensey Bay, about seven miles north-west of Beachy Head. The Normans sailed from *St. Valery*, a small port on the French coast, thirty-five miles north of Rouen; there is another port of the same name further north, at the mouth of the Somme.
2. **Barricade**, akin to 'barrier' and 'bar,' that which keeps back or protects.
3. **Hastings**, on the south coast of England, in Sussex. A few miles north-west of Hastings is the small town of *Battle*, whose abbey marks the scene of the struggle.
4. **Golden Dragon**. The standard of the old Britons was the 'Red Dragon.' The West Saxons adopted the 'Golden Dragon' as their national standard.
5. **Waltham**, in Essex, on the Lea, about thirteen miles from London. The abbey was *originally* founded by Cnut, and was restored by Harold.

## HOW THE ENGLISH PEOPLE LIVED IN THE OLDEN TIME.



A SAXON TEACHING HIS BOY TO USE THE CROSS-BOW.

THE English who lived in those early days, from Alfred the Great down to King Harold, had very different houses, dress, and occupations, from what we have in England now.

In those early times the towns were small. Most of the people lived on farms—tilling the fields, sowing, reaping, or gathering the corn; attending to the cows and oxen, the goats, geese, and poultry; watching sheep; or following the

large herds of swine that were then fed in the forests. The sheep were reared mainly for their wool; so that, had you lived then, you could have bought a sheep in February for a shilling, which in June would be sold for perhaps five shillings!

The swine, again, were kept in large numbers to serve as food for all classes. In the county of Essex alone, which then was nearly all forest, we read that ninety-three thousand were counted in one year. One nobleman left two thousand swine to his two daughters; and another man gave land to the Church on condition that two hundred swine be fed for the use of his wife!

The early English had excellent gardens and orchards, though many of the fruits and vegetables now common were then unknown. There were hundreds of beehives in almost every village, and honey was nearly as common as bread; and many ages had yet to elapse before sugar was brought from abroad. From the honey they made *mead*, a drink used at all their feasts.

Women of all ranks could spin thread, and weave or embroider cloth; and we read that the ladies in King Alfred's family and the wife of Duke William of Normandy were expert with the needle and at the distaff.

The houses of that period were mostly of wood; and we are told of such large places as the Abbey of Croyland,<sup>1</sup> with its infirmary, chapel, baths, hall, brewery,<sup>2</sup> bakehouse, granary, and stables, all built of beams and boards.

The common houses were poor enough, but the wealthier classes had their walls covered with rich hangings. Their chairs (often resembling camp-stools), benches, and tables were sometimes richly carved and ornamented with gold and silver. The ordinary house



had no bed-rooms. In one poem we read how, after the guests had supped, the tables were removed, and the men lay down to sleep on beds which were brought in by the servants, and covered themselves with their cloaks.

Everybody knows that King Alfred could play the harp. Other instruments of music used by the English were the horn, trumpet, flute, drum, cymbal, viol, lyre, and a sort of organ. Some of the gleemen<sup>3</sup> who travelled from town to town not only played the harp or flute, but sang or even composed ballads; and others could dance and perform clever tricks as jugglers,<sup>4</sup> or feats of strength as tumblers.<sup>5</sup>

The men of those days wore a tunic,<sup>6</sup> linen or woollen (according to the season), reaching to the knee, with



ANGLO-SAXON COSTUMES.

a short cloak over it, which was fastened at the throat or shoulder by a brooch. In the pictures of the poorer people, we generally see them bare-legged, but scarcely ever bare-footed.

In our time many poor people seldom taste flesh-meat, but with the early English

it was used largely by all classes. You must remember, however, that it was not so good as what we can now buy; and that it was not only salted during a great part of the year, but that they had scarcely any vegetable but colewort<sup>7</sup> to eat with it, and often not even that.

Though these early forefathers of ours had curious

houses and many curious habits, yet in some things we must admire them. They seem all to have used warm baths; and when any stranger came to a friend's house, they always brought him water to wash his hands, and a hot foot-bath.

Women were highly respected, and laws were made to compel men to treat them justly and honourably. We sometimes read of a queen sitting with the Witan (that is, the wise men who met together to advise the king); and you may remember how King Alfred's daughter, the Lady of Mercia, had great power in her time.

When a man was thought to be guilty of a great crime, the judges of that rude period sometimes tried him in a very strange way. They ordered him to plunge his arm into scalding hot water, or carry a hot iron for three paces. Then after three days, if his wound had healed, he was declared innocent; but if not, he was punished as guilty. This was called the *ordeal*.

All the princes and nobles were fond of hunting and hawking; and even kings, as for example Alfred, Harold "Hare-foot," and Edward the Confessor, delighted in these sports. Perhaps you will be shocked to know that, up till the time of Hare-foot's father, it was very common to see the huntsmen start on a Sunday to chase the wild boar or the deer—some on horseback, some with hawks on their wrists, some shouting to the yelping dogs, and some in the distance already blowing their noisy horns.

A thousand vassals mustered round,  
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;  
And through the brake the rangers stalk,  
And falconers hold the ready hawk;

And foresters, in greenwood trim,  
 Lead in the leash the gaze-hounds grim,  
 Attentive as the slow-hounds' bay  
 From the dark covert drove the prey,  
 To slip them as he broke away.  
 The startled quarry bounds amain,  
 As fast the gallant greyhounds strain,  
 While all the rocks and hills reply  
 To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry,  
 And bugles ringing lightsomely.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Perhaps the worst vices of our forefathers were their gluttony and drunkenness. The Frenchman, Italian, or Spaniard, did not eat and drink one quarter of what he saw consumed by an Englishman at one of his boisterous feasts, where huge joints were hacked and mangled by knives of every degree, and then washed down by deep and numberless draughts of coarse ale and mead. To every man of English blood (whether Angle or Saxon or Dane) it was a matter of course to drink till he was drunk at every feast; and this rule was as faithfully observed by thanes,<sup>8</sup> earls, and abbots,<sup>9</sup> as by the meanest labourers and serfs!<sup>10</sup>

1. **Croyland monastery**, in Lincolnshire, of which the ruins are still to be seen, was founded by Ethelbald, king of Mercia, in 716.

2. **Brewery**. The affix *y* shows the *place where*, and is usually joined to the name of the doer. Cf. baker-y, smith-y, &c.

3. **Gleemen** really meant 'singers.' The A.S. word *glee* meant 'music.' It afterwards came to mean *mirth, joy, sport*. The Saxons usually sang to the music of a harp which they called *glee-wood*.

4. **Juggler**, from a French word applied to one who performs tricks by 'sleight-of-hand.'

5. **Tumbler**, one who performs tricks like a mountebank.

6. **Tunic**, a tight-fitting under-garment worn by both sexes.

7. **Colewort** or kale-plant, a species of cabbage. Shakespeare refers to it when he says—  
 'While greasy Joan doth *kele* the pot.'

8. **Thanes** were the lowest rank of *eorls* or nobles. They held at least five hides or 600 acres of land. The word means *servants* of the king. They were also called *Gesths* or *comrades* of the king.

9. **Abbot**, literally 'father,' the head of an abbey or monastery.

10. **Serfs**, A.S. *Theowes* or slaves. These were slaves by birth, or those who had lost their liberty through crime or for debt, or who were prisoners of war.



## VII. ENGLAND UNDER THE NORMANS.

### THE CONQUEROR CROWNED.



WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

HO were the Normans?—

The Northmen were those wild tribes from Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, who came south to other parts of Europe and caused very great trouble, bloodshed and destruction. You have already read of their landing in England, Scotland, and France, under the name of Danes.<sup>1</sup> Though they were so much hated and dreaded

by the English, yet those savage Northmen were of the same race as the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, who had sailed over to settle in this island a few centuries earlier.<sup>2</sup>

Many groups of the wild Northmen settled in France; the chief band was that which sailed up the river Seine under *Rolf* the Ganger in the time of our king Alfred. Rolf, the tall Norseman, was also called *Rou*, and his capital was therefore called *Rouen*. As the power of the Northmen became greater, the country was called *Normandy* after them, and the people themselves were named *Normands* or *Normans*.

Rolf the Ganger was thus the first Duke of Normandy. He ruled it so well (Frenchmen afterwards

said) that, when he hung up his golden bracelets on a tree, they remained there for more than three years and no man dared to touch them.<sup>3</sup> The second Duke was Rolf's son, William of the Long Sword; in his time the Normans ceased to speak their own northern tongue, but imitated their French neighbours in language, dress, manners and religion. Another Norman Duke was Richard the Fearless; and in his reign and those of his successors, the descendants of the old Norse pirates rode about as Christian knights, feudal nobles, and 'gentlemen,'—for this is the very time when that famous word began first to be used. The sixth Duke was called Robert the Devil—a terrible nickname which the poor serfs<sup>4</sup> and peasantry gave him. This Duke had poisoned his own brother in order to be ruler of Normandy; and his son, William, was the rival of King Harold and the Conqueror of England.

By this time the Normans had no trace left of their northern origin, except their large limbs and fair complexions, and perhaps their cruelty and love of fighting. To this very day, the people of Normandy differ in some respects from the rest of the people of France.

**Christmas Day in Westminster Abbey.**—When King Harold and his brothers were killed by the Normans at the battle of Senlac, the English had no leaders, and Duke William was very soon master of all the south of England. There were two powerful Earls in the north, Edwin and Morcar, who, as their armies were intact, might have done something; but, on the news of Duke William's success, they at once hurried off, and left the men of the south to meet the Conqueror as they best might.

When the Normans had over-run all the country

round about London, the citizens thought it wise to send a friendly deputation to Duke William. He, at first, would not enter their city; but had a strong castle built outside the walls whence he might overawe the capital. On the completion of his new tower, he announced that he would be crowned on the approaching Christmas-day in the Abbey of Westminster.

There was very great stir and excitement that day in London. All the streets along which Duke William rode were lined with double rows of horsemen and foot-soldiers. As he entered the new Abbey, which was decked in grandest state, the Conqueror was attended by two hundred and sixty knights in splendid armour; around the altar there thronged monks, priests, and bishops, in full canonicals.<sup>5</sup>

In one part of the building there stood a large number of Englishmen, and opposite them an equal number of Normans; while at the doors and all round the Abbey outside the soldiers waited in eager suspense. One of William's bishops then asked the Normans if they wished the Duke to become king of England. They assented with loud cheers. The Archbishop of York then put the same question to the English, and they shouted "Yea! yea!" with still louder cheers.

So loud and confused, indeed, were the shouting, cheering and uproar, that the French soldiers outside the Abbey took alarm and thought their duke was being murdered. In a few minutes, they all rushed to attack some houses near the Abbey, killing many of the English whom they found; and, presently, the little town of Westminster was all smoking and blazing. Meanwhile the panic inside the Abbey equalled

the mad tumult without—the Normans believing that the men of London had risen against them, and the English suspecting that they had been brought there unarmed to be butchered by the crafty invaders.

In frightful confusion, both English and foreigners hurried from the Abbey; and William was left, almost alone, beside the throne where he had been waiting for the Archbishop to anoint him. One Latin writer tells us that, brave soldier as he was, the Duke shook from head to foot. He refused, however, to put off the coronation; and thus it was that, with so bad a grace, the Norman Duke was crowned king of England on Christmas-day, 1066.

1. Danes, see p. 90.

2. See p. 53.

3. A legend which has appeared under many forms in different countries—*e.g.*, to show the good rule of Edwin over the North

Angles, or that of Alfred over England, &c.

4. Serfs, slaves.

5. Canonicals, *i.e.*, the dress prescribed by the canons of the church for the clergy when officiating.

## CONQUEST AND CRUELTY.

**T**HOUGH crowned by an English Archbishop in Westminster Abbey, the new king was not yet really master of the country. There was not only much fighting yet to do, but there were many difficulties of ruling and governing to overcome, which required great energy and resolution.

The people of Exeter hated the invaders; and, as that town was well fortified, they defied the new king and endured a siege which lasted eighteen days.<sup>1</sup>

William then marched as far as York to suppress a great insurrection<sup>2</sup> under the Earls Edwin and Morcar. He defeated them and left a strong garrison in the northern capital. A Danish fleet, however, entered the

Humber to join the English army. The Normans held the castle ; and, as they wished to have the ground clear all round, they set fire to the houses close by ; but the wind causing the flames to spread, the city and cathedral of York were speedily also on fire. It was during the confusion which followed that the English and Danes fell upon the Normans and slew them almost to a man.

In Gloucestershire, there is a beautiful district called



THE NORMANS ON THE MARCH.

the Forest of Dean.<sup>3</sup> In the Norman king's time, this forest swarmed with red deer and wild boar ; and here King William was hunting when the news came that three thousand Normans had been slain by the English at York. Mad with rage, he made a terrible vow that not a single Northumbrian should escape his vengeance. He at once summoned an army and marched to York. The Saxon leader, Waltheof,<sup>4</sup> fought bravely, but it was



in vain. The city was taken, and the gallant defenders were put to the sword.

After spending Christmas in York, the Norman king proceeded to carry out his cruel revenge on Northumbria. He resolved to place a wilderness of more than sixty miles between his Normans and the Scottish border, by killing or driving away every living creature, by burning every house, and by destroying all that could support human life.

To do this infamous work, the Norman army was divided into separate columns so as to spread widely over the doomed district. They began at the Ouse and slowly crossed Yorkshire, like a fatal and cursed blight, wasting, burning, and murdering; till at last they reached the Tees,<sup>5</sup> the Wear,<sup>6</sup> and even the Tyne.<sup>7</sup>

Both English and French writers mention this barbarity of King William in terms of horror and wonder; some even saying that by the devastation and the famine that followed, as many as a hundred thousand persons perished.

Returning from his barbarous revenge, the Norman king, though it was midwinter, led his men by a way so rough, that his army was broken up—the soldiers having to cross the rivers and mountains in detached parties. William himself once lost his way and spent a whole night without knowing where he was or whereabouts his soldiers were; and, on reaching York, he found that nearly all their horses had perished in the snow!

Was the anger of the Norman king appeased? Not for a moment. In a few weeks, in spite of storms of snow, sleet and hail, he ordered his knights to set out for Chester. When at last some of the French mercenaries began to grumble, William said, "Let them go;

"I don't want them!" But they would not go back for very shame, since they saw their iron-willed leader sharing the same hardships and dangers.

After taking the city of Chester, King William laid the foundations of a strong castle there, and left that district under the command of a Fleming, who became the first Earl of Chester.



THE TOWER OF LONDON.

Marching south by Salisbury, William stopped at Winchester; and in his castle there he no doubt enjoyed some rest after that toilsome winter campaign.

William built many strongholds to overawe the Eng-

lish. Besides that at Winchester where he often lived, there were those of Hereford, Rochester and others; and you may remember that he did not visit London till a tower was built for him just outside the city walls. He afterwards erected a stronger fortress there, and in some respects the Tower of London is the most interesting of all the buildings left by the Normans in England.

When you visit the Tower you will see the square "Keep" in the centre much as it was in the time of the great Norman king, with the very council-chamber in which he and many kings after him sat and the Banqueting Hall where they dined. For the Tower of London was a palace as well as a citadel; indeed, an old historian shows that it was used for seven distinct and important purposes. It now serves for at least an eighth, since that same Banqueting Hall, where so many royal families have ate and drank, talked and laughed, is filled with many thousand stands of rifles.

1. In 1066.

2. *Insurrection, a rising against, a rebellion.*

3. Forest of Dean, between the Severn and the Lower Wye.

4. Waltheof, Earl of Nottingham, the last of the Old English Earls.

5. *Tees.* This river forms the boundary between Yorkshire and Durham.

6. *Wear rises in the Pennine Chain: enters the sea at Sunderland.*

7. *Tyne.* The lower Tyne flows between Durham and Northumberland.

## HEREWARD THE WATCHFUL.

WHILE William the Norman and his knights were lording it over the English everywhere, the conquered people often regretted the death of Harold and his brothers, and wished for another Alfred or Athelstan or an Edmund Ironside. At last a hero appeared, who was able for a long time to defy the Normans.

Hereward was a man of Lincolnshire and had been

deprived by the foreigners of his lands. Having formed a small army of Englishmen as brave and high-spirited as himself, he soon drove off the Normans from his estate. Hearing that a French monk had been sent with a guard of Norman soldiers to take possession of the rich abbey of Peterborough,<sup>1</sup> Hereward marched thither; and very soon the foreigners were dispersed, the concealed treasures of the monks plundered, and the abbey and the town set on fire. Much of the money was used to pay some Danes who had assisted the English in making the attack.

The French monk resolved to punish Hereward for the loss of the rich abbey; so he returned with a large force of Norman knights. It was not easy to find the English, because their fortress of wood was in the Isle of Ely, a district in the north of Cambridgeshire, then surrounded by broad streams and marshes with dangerous pools.

The monk, however, was certain of success, and urged the horsemen to advance. As their commander, Tailbois, with the main body of the knights, entered a thick wood, the watchful Hereward suddenly pounced upon the astonished monk and his party, took them prisoners, and carried them and their horses away unobserved by Tailbois. The soldier-monk was then shut up in a damp dungeon till the sum of two thousand pounds was paid to ransom him and his fellow-captives.

There are many stories told of the wary and watchful Hereward. His fame as a bold leader was so great that Earl Morcar went to the Isle of Ely and lived with him in his "Camp of Refuge," as the fortress sometimes was called. At last, the Norman King himself determined to crush this daring enemy.

He raised a great army, and ordered a fleet of ships to keep watch on the adjoining coast.

William had resolved to take the fortress, but how was it possible to reach it? The waters all round the Isle were at no point less than two miles across; and he spent much time in making bridges and constructing a causeway<sup>2</sup> of wood through the marsh.

Hereward the Watchful made frequent attacks on William's men; these assaults were so sudden and successful, that the Normans believed he was assisted by some evil spirit. Even Tailbois thought it must be so, perhaps remembering how suddenly his friend the Abbot had been snatched away in the wood; and King William at length agreed that a witch should be brought in order that her spells and charms might act against and undo those of the English!

A high tower was erected, whence William could see his men laying the road through the marsh, and watch the movements of the English. It was decided to place the witch on the top of this tower to work her spells. Hereward, however, seemed little daunted or damaged by her magical influence; for his sallies<sup>3</sup> were as daring and deadly as ever. One day, after some dry weather, he set fire to the reeds and brush-wood by the edge of the marsh, so that the flames spread to the wood-work; and before William's knights could come to their assistance, the tower with the workmen and soldiers around and the witch on the top were all burnt.

King William, however, would not withdraw. After a close siege of three months, the English were short of provisions; and some of the monks urged Hereward to send a message to the Norman king proposing a sur-

render. On his refusal, it is said that they secretly promised to show the Normans a safe passage through the fens, on condition that the houses and lands belonging to their monastery should not be touched.

Another account is that Morcar and some of the other leaders lost heart; but, whatever the true reason was, King William at last gained the famous Isle. All in the English camp, except Hereward, submitted to the Normans. He, watchful and brave as ever, suddenly cut his way through the enemy, and reached his native county of Lincoln in safety.

The last we hear of Hereward the Watchful, is that after some years King William made him offers of friendship and received him into favour. The bold bearing and manliness of Hereward were admired by all his enemies; and it became a saying among them that "if there had been three more men in the land like him, the Normans would never have taken it."

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| 1. Peterborough, a cathedral city on the Nen. | 2. Causeway, a raised way or path. |
|   | 3. Sallies, sudden attacks.        |

## CHANGES MADE BY THE CONQUEST.

**W**E have already read of William the Norman's barbarity in turning a very large district in Yorkshire and Durham into a wilderness. In Hampshire also the people were driven from their homes in order to provide him with a hunting-ground, which was certainly no sufficient reason for causing misery to so many families.

You remember how King William was hunting in the Forest of Dean when the news came to him that all the Normans in York had been killed by the

English. Strangely enough, he had been also hunting in a forest near Rouen and in the very act of bending his famous bow,<sup>1</sup> when the messenger arrived to say that Edward the Confessor was dead and that Harold had been crowned King of England.

In fact, hunting was a passion with William, and though there were already many royal parks and forests in England he formed the new hunting-ground<sup>2</sup> near his palace of Winchester. That large district, ninety miles round, was thus laid waste for one man's pleasure; and fertile farms and manors, villages and towns (including, it is said, thirty-six parish churches) were all destroyed to make room for "His Majesty's wild beasts."

An English writer of that time says of the royal forests, that "King William made laws for them, that whoever should slay hart or hind, him man should blind; as he forbade the slaying of harts, so also did he of boars. So much he loved the high deer as if he had been their father. His rich men moaned and the poor men murmured, but he was so hard that he recked not<sup>3</sup> the hatred of them all. Alas! that any man should be so moody, and should so puff up himself, and think himself above all others!"

Those Norman *Forest-Laws* were a source of great misery throughout England, because in many parts there were thousands who had depended upon the chase for a living. The old English kings, such as Alfred and Edgar, and even the Confessor, had also been fond of hunting; but in their times, as we have already said, every man was allowed to kill all the game on his own land.

The Normans also introduced the *Curfew*<sup>4</sup> *Bell* into

England; and very hateful was its sound to every man and woman of the subject race, who felt it to be a badge and daily reminder of servitude. On the other hand, it appears that the Norman invaders had already been accustomed to it as a precaution against fire, for at that time houses were mostly built of wood. It was probably also intended to prevent certain "clubs" or meetings at night of the discontented Saxons, who no doubt took every opportunity of plotting against the Normans.

Even English writers say that William the Norman enforced law and justice. He renewed the old laws, and promised to govern as an English King; and though Normans became lords of the land, still they were compelled to live as English lords and to respect the English laws and customs.

William even forbade any criminal to be punished with death. He also prohibited the sale of men into slavery; and we read of St. Wulfstan urging the people of Bristol to observe this good law—that seaport having then much trade in slaves.

You have already seen that the Normans did much to improve the art of building. To this day their churches and castles are greatly admired. But they did more than that for our country; they brought over many learned men, such as Archbishop Lanfranc and after him Archbishop Anselm, who by their teaching and their books led men to read and think as Alfred the Great had done in former days.

There is another act of William which is too important to be passed over. This was a survey of his kingdom, copied into two large volumes called the *Domesday Book*.<sup>5</sup> Men went throughout the counties



and registered every estate, giving its size, what portions were arable, pasture, meadow, or wood, the name of the owner and the feudal service due by him, and also who had held it in King Edward's reign, with its previous and its present value. From this record, we know that all the people then in the land were under two million in number; and also that, while the largest estates were held by Normans, in many parts there still were English landholders.

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| <p>1. Famous because, according to Norman tradition, no man but he could bend it.</p> <p>2. Still called the New Forest.</p> <p>3. <i>Recked not, cared not.</i> Cf. <i>reckless</i>.</p> | <p>4. <i>Curfew</i>, from the French <i>couvre-feu</i>, meaning the 'fire-cover.'</p> <p>5. <i>Domesday Book</i> was compiled in 1085-6; now kept in the Chapter House at Westminster.</p> |
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## CLOSE OF THE CONQUEROR'S REIGN.

THOUGH so successful as the ruler of a great country, King William had much unhappiness. He had promised that, if he gained England, he should give Normandy to his eldest son. But when Robert claimed the duchy, King William said, "My son, I never throw off my clothes till I go to bed." This breach of faith raised a bitter feeling between William and Robert. The two younger sons, William and Henry, whom the king treated with great favour, did their utmost to aggravate the quarrel; and King William even forbade Queen Matilda to send any message or assistance to her eldest son.

After various adventures in Flanders, Gascony,<sup>1</sup> and other lands, Robert settled for some time at the French court; and soon after King Philip gave him a castle near Normandy, called *Gerberoi*.<sup>2</sup> There he was joined by many knights, attracted by promises of pay and plunder. King William heard that a number of Normans, and even some of his own household, were serving under

his rebellious son. Full of rage, he at once left England with a large army to punish Robert.

The castle of Gerberoi, however, was very strong, and all efforts to take it were in vain. At last, a strange combat between two knights suddenly brought the siege to a close. One knight was from the castle, the other belonged to the besiegers; both were well mounted and in full armour, with their visors down; and as they spurred their horses to deadly encounter, you might see that both were men of vigour and daring. The besieging knight was unhorsed, and as he shouted to his companions for help, the victor recognised the voice as that of King William himself. Quickly dismounting, he fell on his knees and entreated pardon with many tears. For it was the son Robert who had fought with and wounded his father.

The humbled king gave up the siege in disgust, and returned to Rouen.

King William met with another, and this time fatal, misfortune in Normandy. He had become very fat and unwieldy; and in the year 1087, as he lay at Rouen, he was much annoyed by reports that King Philip's knights harried and plundered the lands of the Normans. William already hated King Philip for having assisted Robert and for other acts against Normandy, so he sent an angry message to the French court. The only reply given by Philip was to make a jest to his courtiers about William's corpulence. When the messengers told this to the hot-tempered Norman king, he got into a furious rage and swore that, as soon as he recovered, he would make the King of France pay dearly for the jest.

In the harvest-time that year, King William, as



WILLIAM AND ROBERT.

soon as he could mount his war-horse, hastened to revenge himself upon the King of France. On his way to Mantes,<sup>3</sup> as soon as he had crossed the boundary of Normandy, he ordered his knights to lay waste the surrounding country.

Mantes itself, which is built on a hill by the beautiful Seine, was speedily taken; and after putting the citizens to the sword, William ordered his Normans to set fire to every house and building, whether cottage or castle, church or hostelry. When the town was thus in flames, he rode amongst the smoking ruins; and it was there that he met his fate. His war-horse, happening to tread on a hot ember which had fallen from one of the burning houses, suddenly reared and plunged so violently that King William was dashed heavily against the pommel of the saddle and seriously bruised and hurt. He dismounted in great pain; and had to be carried slowly in a litter all the way to Rouen.

The Norman King was never again to see England; never again to spend Easter<sup>4</sup> at Winchester, Pentecost<sup>4</sup> at Westminster, or Christmas<sup>4</sup> at Gloucester. During the three weeks that he lay at Rouen on his deathbed, he showed repentance for the evil that he had done. He sent money to rebuild Mantes, and ordered large sums to be given to the churches and religious houses in England. He left Normandy to his eldest son Robert; as for his kingdom of England, he said he should leave God to decide who should rule it, but that he wished his son William to succeed him as King. To his third son, Henry, King William gave no land; presenting him instead with five thousand pounds of silver.

Some days afterwards the body of the great Conqueror was brought down to the broad river Seine, and taken by boat from Rouen to the church at *Caen*,<sup>5</sup> which he had himself founded.

1. *Gascony*, in the south-west of France, between the Garonne and the Pyrenees.

2. *Gerberoi*, on the borders of Normandy, near Beauvais.

3. *Mantes*, about thirty-four miles north-west of Paris.

4. These were the three occasions, according to the Saxon Chronicle, when William wore his crown every year when he was in England.

5. *Caen*, on the small river Orne, ten miles from its mouth.

## THE BURIAL OF THE CONQUEROR.

LOWLY upon his bier  
The royal Conqueror lay ;  
Baron and chief stood near,  
Silent in war array.

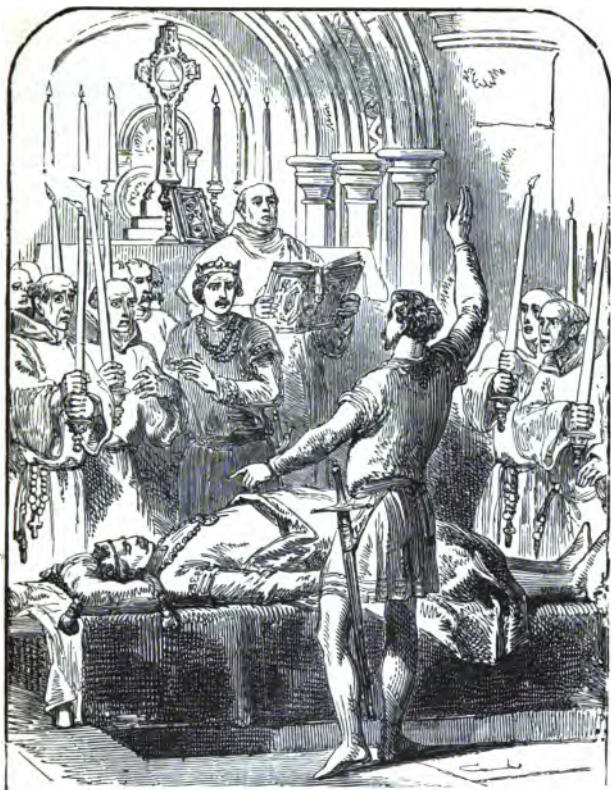
They lowered him with the sound  
Of requiems <sup>1</sup> to repose ;  
When from the throngs around  
A solemn voice arose :

“Forbear ! forbear !” it cried,  
“In the holiest name forbear !  
He hath conquered regions wide,  
But he shall not slumber *there* !

“By the violated hearth  
Which made way for yon proud shrine ;  
By the harvests which this earth  
Hath borne for me and mine ;

“By the home e’en here o’erthrown,  
On my brethren’s native spot ;—  
Hence with his dark renown,  
Cumber our birthplace not !

“Each pillar’s massy bed  
Hath been wet by weeping eyes ;  
Away ! bestow your dead  
Where no voice against him cries.”



THE BURIAL OF THE CONQUEROR.

Shame glowed on each dark face  
Of these proud and steel-girt men,  
And they bought with gold a place  
For their leader's dust e'en then—

A little earth for him  
Whose banner flew so far!  
And a peasant's tale could dim  
The name—a nation's star!—MRS. HEMANS.

1. *Requiem*s, masses for the dead : solemn songs.

**WILLIAM RUFUS AND HIS BROTHERS.****WILLIAM RUFUS.**

**E**VEN before the breath had left the body of his father, William the Red had started for England; and he at once seized the strong castles of Dover, Pevensey and Hastings. He then hurried to Winchester to claim the royal treasures which were kept there. The keys being delivered to him by his father's treasurer, he found himself master of sixty thousand pounds of pure silver, with much gold and many precious stones.

The leading man then in England was Lanfranc, a learned priest whom the Conqueror had made Archbishop of Canterbury. Lanfranc was devoted to the Normans, although himself an Italian. He not only assisted the Red King to secure the crown, but, when some of the Norman nobles rebelled in favour of Duke Robert, kept all the bishops and many others faithful to William.

William the Red had much of the high spirit and courage of his father, but he lived a more vicious and reckless life; and after the death of Lanfranc, he was guilty of great cruelty and tyranny. His chief minister was a low-born Norman churchman, Ralph, nicknamed Flambard (the Firebrand). He made the King laugh with his coarse jests and boisterous mirth; while, as

royal treasurer, he extorted money by every cunning and impudent device to pay for William's extravagance and riot.

William and some of his friends resolved to punish Duke Robert of Normandy, because he had attempted to gain the crown of England. Many of the Norman castles were captured before Robert took any part in the fighting; and Rouen his chief town would have been lost by the treachery of Conan a wealthy citizen, had not Robert got his youngest brother Henry to assist him. He had previously quarrelled with Henry, and according to one account even put him in prison; but now they both agreed in fighting together against their brother the king of England.

On entering Rouen, Henry wished to punish Conan with death; but Duke Robert (like his father the Conqueror) was very averse to hanging or beheading any criminal, and ordered him to be imprisoned for life. Henry thought his brother was too soft-hearted; and it is said that, some days after, he went to the tower where Conan was confined, and took the prisoner to the top of a high turret, and that while speaking with him, he suddenly caught the doomed man by the waist and hurled him over the battlements!"<sup>1</sup> When one of his friends showed horror at this fearful act, Henry merely replied that it was very unfitting that a traitor should ever escape punishment.

Not long after, Rufus went to Normandy and made an agreement with Robert—that if William died first, Robert should become king of England; and, if the duke died first, that William should obtain Normandy. Both brothers now united against Henry, William being very jealous of his youngest brother's ability and energy.



They overran his territory and soon took all his strongholds except one, a famous castle on a lofty rock on the coast of Normandy.

This castle of Mont St. Michael<sup>2</sup> was so strong that it was impossible to take it by storm, therefore King William resolved to starve the garrison out, and was glad to hear that the besieged had neglected to provide themselves with water. The kind-hearted Robert, on the other hand, allowed some of his followers to carry some water secretly into the castle, with a present of wine for Henry himself. This came to the knowledge of the Red King, and in a great passion he asked his elder brother what he meant by such madness. "Oh!" said Duke Robert, with great simplicity, "how can I let my brother die of thirst? Where shall we find another brother when he is gone?"

There is another story about the siege of this castle on the rock. One day King William was riding on the coast without any companions, when two of Henry's soldiers met him and attacked him. In a moment he was unhorsed, and as one of the men raised a dagger to kill him, William cried "Hold, knave! I am the king of England!" The astonished soldier not only spared his life, but assisted him again to his saddle with such respect that the Red King took a great fancy for the man, and afterwards made a great favourite of him.

Henry was obliged to surrender his strong castle; and, deprived of all that he had, for some time after wandered about in poverty, an "errant knight." Who would then have suspected that he should one day wear the crown of England with power and honour?

**The Knights of the Cross.**—It was in the reign of

William the Red King that those strange wars called the Crusades<sup>3</sup> first began. What were the Crusades?

There was a monk called Peter the Hermit, who had travelled all the way from Amiens<sup>4</sup> in France to Jerusalem; and, on his return, he told terrible tales of how the Christians in the Holy Land were treated by the Mohammedans. The Hermit spoke with such enthusiasm that nearly all who heard him believed he had been sent by God for the delivery of Jerusalem from the followers of the False Prophet. Wherever he went, excited crowds flocked to hear him; and many followed him for miles as he passed from one province or city to another, bare-headed and barefooted, clad in a hermit's coarse cloak, with a cord round his waist, and holding a crucifix in his hand.

Never perhaps did eloquence work such wonders as did the preaching of this remarkable man. The Pope had to put himself at the head of the movement; and when he urged every man to offer himself as a soldier to deliver the Holy City from the Saracens, an army was immediately formed to march to Palestine. That march of Christians against the Mohammedans in the Holy Land was called a 'Crusade,' or war of the cross. Many thousands of the Crusaders perished long before they reached the Holy Land. Of a huge army of more than half a million fighting men who set out in the year 1097, it is said that only forty thousand reached Jerusalem two years later. After a siege of six weeks, they took the Holy City, put many thousand Mohammedans to the sword, and burnt the Jews in their synagogues.<sup>5</sup>

Among the hundreds of Norman knights who joined the first crusade, one of the most conspicuous was

Duke Robert. In order to have money enough for so great an expedition, he gave up Normandy for five years to his brother William for ten thousand marks.

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| 1. <b>Battlements</b> , the parapets behind which the defenders of a castle discharged their missiles at the enemy.<br>2. <b>Mont St. Michael</b> , in the Bay of St. Malo, on the extreme west of Normandy. | 3. <b>Crusades</b> , that is, 'Wars of the Cross,' so called from the Latin <i>crux</i> , a cross.<br>4. <b>Amiens</b> , on the Somme, 70 miles north of Paris.<br>5. <b>Synagogues</b> , Jewish places of worship. |
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## THE RED KING IN THE FOREST.

THE great forest made in Hampshire by William the Conqueror was called the New Forest, as it still is; and the favourite amusement of William the Red was to hunt there. One day a messenger came to him, when thus engaged, to say that some of his newly-acquired subjects in France had revolted. In an instant, he hurried from the forest to the nearest sea-port; and, in spite of a threatening storm, he went on board the first sailing vessel he found there. The sailors urged the danger of putting out to sea in such a gale; but the Red King ordered them to weigh anchor and hoist their sails. "Did you ever hear of a king being drowned?" he asked; though, as one old historian remarks, they might have reminded their fiery king of Pharaoh and the Red Sea. Landing next day on the French coast, William speedily asserted his authority at Mans<sup>1</sup> where the insurrection had taken place.

On another day in the same year, his sport in the New Forest was again suddenly interrupted, but this time in a very different fashion. The common people had many superstitious<sup>2</sup> tales about the place, which was connected in their minds with the Conqueror's cruel

evictions<sup>d</sup> and his tyrannical Forest laws. A brother of William had met his death in this very forest, and this same year his nephew, the son of Duke Robert, had been killed by an arrow. Some hinted darkly that these were judgments on the family, and that others would yet follow. The king, however, went on the first



THE MESSENGER WARNING RUFUS.

of August to his hunting-seat in the forest with a number of knights, among whom was his brother Henry. The chase was to begin next day ; but, in the dead of night, the Red King was disturbed by horrible dreams and would not remain alone till morning.

At breakfast he was more boisterous than usual,

laughing and talking loudly. A messenger from a certain abbot warned the king, on account of a dream, not to go hunting that day. With a loud laugh the king said, "Give him a hundred pence, and tell him next time to dream better fortune to our person."

Whether afraid or not, William delayed the hunt; and in the afternoon, when about to start, his mirth still seemed as forced as it was noisy. Just then a man brought him six new arrows, which he praised for their make; and two of them he gave to Sir Walter Tyrrel who stood by, saying, "A good sportsman should have good weapons."

They all started for the hunt—William in one direction with Sir Walter Tyrrel as his only companion; Prince Henry, and the other knights and hunters, in other directions. No man knows what then happened; except that soon after two knights found the King lying on the ground, pierced in the breast with an arrow. Who shot that fatal shaft we cannot tell. Tyrrel, who was accused of the deed, fled to France. Some think there had been a conspiracy<sup>4</sup> to murder the Red King, and that perhaps his brother Prince Henry had a share in it.

The New Forest was near Winchester. To that town, in the evening of the following day, there came a country cart followed by some peasants and woodmen. In it lay the dead body of the Red King, all covered with blood and mire. All his knights and gay companions had left him on the ground; and even the two Norman gentlemen who had found the dying king had hurried away.

William was called the Red on account of the colour of his skin. His hair was flaxen in youth, and after-

wards yellow. In his later years, like his father, he became very fat; and from his sudden bursts of anger, his fierce and scowling looks, and loud voice, he came to be both hated and feared by all around him.

1. *Mans*, capital of Maine, about 120 miles south-west of Paris.

2. *Superstitious*, literally, being excessive in anything; having exaggerated belief in

mysterious or supernatural powers.

3. *Eviction*, expulsion of people from their homes.

4. *Conspiracy*, secret plot.

## HENRY SEIZES THE CROWN.



HENRY I.

Of all the knights and huntsmen who abandoned the Red King in the forest, there was none more selfish than his brother, Prince Henry. Long before William's body was brought to Winchester, Henry had ridden into that town and demanded the royal treasures there, somewhat as the Red King himself had done thirteen years previously.

Had the death of William happened a week later, Henry might never have been king of England, for his elder brother Duke Robert was about to arrive in Normandy on his return from the Holy Land. It seemed as if everything had been arranged; for, after being proclaimed king at Winchester on Friday (the day after his brother's death), we find him on the Sunday following sixty miles off in Westminster Abbey, near London. As he stood before the altar there, Henry promised to annul<sup>1</sup> all the unrighteous acts of his

brother's reign, and was then anointed king by the Bishop of London.

The new monarch was very careful to remind the people that, having been born at Selby<sup>2</sup> in Yorkshire, he was an Englishman. He also pleased the Saxons by marrying Matilda of Scotland, the daughter of Margaret the sister of Edgar Atheling. You may remember that Edgar and Margaret went to the Scottish court when England was conquered by William the First, and there she married Malcolm Canmore. The marriage of Henry with Matilda, "of the right kingly kin of England," was approved of by Archbishop Anselm, who had left the country during the Red King's reign but was now restored to his see of Canterbury and held in great honour.

Henry made many promises to his subjects. He signed a charter in which he undertook not to seize the property and revenues<sup>3</sup> of the church; not to treat the barons and other vassals<sup>4</sup> of the crown so harshly as the Red King had done; and to restore the laws of King Edward the Confessor, which were especially dear to the Saxons.

Queen Matilda was fond of learning; and, like her mother, Margaret of Scotland, was ever kind and charitable to the poor. Henry himself was called Beauclerc, or the Good Scholar, because he could read and write well—an accomplishment which few knights of those days ever thought worth while to acquire.

King Henry not only recalled the learned Archbishop Anselm, but he speedily dismissed all the friends of the Red King from court. The chief of these was Flam-bard the Firebrand, who had so greedily forced money from the people; and the new king was very willing to

punish him, as the great wealth he had amassed would then be forfeited to the crown. Flambard was thrown into the Tower; and, it is said, he so amused his jailors by his coarse jokes and bribed them with presents, that they allowed him to receive messages from his friends without. One day, a large vessel of wine was brought to him; in it a rope was hidden. Flambard, after making his keepers drunk with the wine, fastened the rope to the top of one of the turrets and so escaped. He then fled to Normandy and incited Duke Robert to make war upon his brother.

Robert knew there were many Normans in England favourable to him, and soon landed at Portsmouth,<sup>5</sup> where he was joined by a number of barons with their followers. Henry, however, had gained the good-will of the English, and was supported by the Church. The two armies of the rival brothers remained inactive for several days; ultimately Robert agreed to withdraw his army, upon Henry's promising to pay him three thousand marks yearly.

Duke Robert was soon in greater difficulties than ever. Through his careless management of Normandy, he could scarcely raise any money; and though already burdened with heavy debts, he made a present to Queen Matilda of the sum which her husband had undertaken to pay. King Henry, however, shared no such generous weakness; for when he saw a chance of taking Normandy, he sailed over with a large army, and defeated his brother at the battle of *Tenchebrai*.<sup>6</sup> Duke Robert himself was taken prisoner, brought to England, and shut up in Cardiff<sup>7</sup> Castle in Wales.

There is one more story of Robert which, if true, proves how hard-hearted his brother Henry was, and



may remind you of his treatment of the citizen of Rouen at the beginning of the Red King's reign. One day, when walking out with his keepers, Robert suddenly leapt on horseback and galloped off; but being ignorant of the country, he was soon captured in a morass into which his horse had brought him. When this news reached King Henry, he cruelly ordered his brother's jailor to inflict a horrible punishment—to hold a red-hot iron basin over Robert's eyes till sight was destroyed. Whether this terrible story be true or not, it is certain that the eldest son of the conqueror died in Cardiff Castle only a few months before the death of his cruel and selfish brother.

1. *Annul*, to cancel, withdraw.

2. *Selby*, on the Ouse, about 12 miles south of York.

3. *Revenue*, the annual income.

4. *Vassals*, those who in feudal times held land under a superior were called his vassals.

5. *Portsmouth*, in Hampshire, now the chief naval port on the south coast of England

6. *Tenchebrai*, in Normandy, about 140 miles west of Paris.

7. *Cardiff*, in South Wales, at the mouth of the Severn.

## THE WRECK OF THE WHITE SHIP.

THOUGH King Henry had little pity for the woes of others, there was one misfortune which made him suffer keenly and filled him with unceasing sorrow. His only son was *William*, who, in his seventeenth year, accompanied his father to Normandy, and was acknowledged by the Norman nobles as their lord. Prince William was then presented to King Louis of France as lord of Normandy, and was betrothed to the daughter of the Count of Anjou. His father, Henry, prepared to return to England full of pride and satisfaction.

When the royal party reached the sea-shore, a ship-captain came to the English king and said, "Sire, my father, Stephen, served your royal father for many years

as a seaman, and steered his ship when he sailed to conquer England; and I now beg to do the same office for your Majesty. I have a vessel, the 'White Ship,' well-built and well-equipped, and manned by fifty of the best seamen in Normandy." The king had already chosen a ship for himself; but he said he should entrust the prince to the care of the mariner Fitz-Stephen. Soon after, the king's party set sail for England.



WRECK OF THE WHITE SHIP.

Meanwhile, Prince William, with a large company of ladies and gentlemen, spent their time in feasting; and when at last the sails were set, it was evident that the crew had drunk too much wine. Fitz-Stephen, however, was confident that they could yet overtake the king's ship, and was urging the sturdy rowers whilst he himself steered, when all at once the 'White Ship' struck on a rock and began rapidly to fill with

water. Amidst the terror and confusion, Fitz-Stephen lowered a small boat, and hurrying the prince and a few of his companions into it, pushed them off in safety, telling them to row back to land.

But among the shrieks which rose from the sinking ship, the prince heard the voice of his sister entreating him not to leave her. He ordered the rowers to return; and, as soon as they came near the ill-fated vessel, their boat was at once filled by so many desperate men that in another moment it went down, and the 'White Ship' also disappeared beneath the waves.<sup>1</sup>

Two men escaped immediate death by clinging to a floating spar—one a butcher of Rouen, the other a young nobleman. In a few hours, the latter was so benumbed and exhausted that he could hold on no longer; and, with a prayer for his companion's safety, he sank, and the waves closed over him. The next morning the poor butcher, the sole survivor of that merry company, was rescued by some fishermen.

No one dared to tell King Henry the news of the shipwreck. When he heard of it, he fell to the ground in a swoon; and it is said that he was never afterwards seen to smile. The English people, however, did not share his sorrow; because, though the drowned prince was the son of the good queen Matilda,<sup>2</sup> he had always shown a spite against her race. He had frequently said to the Norman lords that, when he became king, the English would "draw the plough;" and that they were only fit to be "beasts of burden."

Heartless and selfish as Henry was, he deserved his title of 'the Scholar;' for there is no doubt that, considering how little learning there then was in Europe, he had studied to some advantage and was fond of men

of letters. He used to say that a king without learning was nothing better than a crowned fool! He was also fond of wild animals, and one writer tells us that, in his park at Woodstock, he kept "all kinds of strange beasts, as lions, leopards, lynxes, camels, porcupines, and the like."

Henry married his daughter Matilda to the son<sup>3</sup> of the Count of Anjou; and although her son afterwards became king of England, he was guilty of many cruel acts. Henry enforced the laws very strictly. He curbed the power of the barons, and restrained them from oppressing the common people. He preserved order, though he did not extend the liberties of his people.

1. This happened in 1120.

2. Note 2, page 131.

3. **Geoffrey Plantagenet.** He got the name of *Plante-genêt* or 'Broom-plant,' because he

used to wear a sprig of that pretty shrub in his cap when hunting. *Genêt* is the French word for broom (Lat. *genista*).

## THE CONQUEROR'S GRANDSON.



STEPHEN.

AS soon as Henry was dead there was great confusion in England. The barons, now that their stern master was gone, acted in the most oppressive way; the common people, to show their hatred of the Norman Forest Laws, now ravaged the royal parks and forests, so that in a short time there was scarcely a single hart or red-deer to be seen on the Crown-lands.<sup>1</sup>

Robbery and other crimes again became common.



THE BISHOP OF DURHAM BLESSING THE TROOPS.

The late king had done everything to secure the crown for his daughter Matilda, but nobody in England loved her; perhaps she resembled her father too much. Neither Englishmen nor Normans ever had had a queen to reign over them, and both races therefore refused to acknowledge the haughty daughter of Henry as their sovereign.

This was a good opportunity for *Stephen*, the Conqueror's grandson. Stephen was the son of Adela the sister of King Henry, and had married Maud, the niece of King David of Scotland and of Henry's queen Matilda. Stephen was already well known in England, and much liked by the people; and when he appeared in London after Henry's death he was welcomed with great joy, at once proclaimed king by the citizens, and crowned at Westminster.

Like the two preceding kings, Stephen hurried to Winchester in order to seize the royal treasures; <sup>2</sup> and, as his brother was bishop of this See, he had no difficulty in obtaining the keys. The royal coffers contained a hundred thousand pounds, besides valuable plate and jewels. This money he used partly to procure him friends and supporters, and partly to hire foreign soldiers. Other powerful men he made friendly by giving them large estates belonging to the crown. The people generally, as well as the barons and clergy, were pleased by the promises which he liberally made to govern justly and to respect their liberties.

**The Scots in Yorkshire.**—Matilda, the daughter of King Henry, was meanwhile preparing to claim the crown of England. Her uncle, King David of Scotland, took up her cause, and led an army into the north of England; but many of his soldiers were half-savage

Islesmen<sup>3</sup> and Galloway-men<sup>4</sup>, who killed and pillaged with almost as great ferocity as the Danes did in olden times.

The men of Yorkshire were so enraged that they gathered a large army, and completely defeated the Scots in the battle of *Northallerton*.<sup>5</sup> This victory is often called the *Battle of the Standard*, because the English rallied round the banners of the three northern saints which were borne aloft upon a high mast and surmounted by the silver pyx.

As the aged Bishop of Durham was praying for victory and blessing the kneeling warriors, the sun's rays burst from behind a cloud. All hailed this as a good omen, and eagerly prepared for the fight.

The centre of the Scottish army consisted of Lowlanders, who in race and language were akin to the men of Yorkshire themselves; but the half-naked Picts from Galloway and the Western Isles fought so wildly that King David soon lost all command of them. The mixed array was completely broken by the well-disciplined and mail-clad soldiers of the south. The English archers also did great service, and gave promise of the wonderful skill which afterwards won the most important victories of the Middle Ages. Eleven thousand of the invaders are said to have fallen in the field. In spite of this decisive battle, Stephen was glad to consent to a treaty by which Matilda's son was to receive Northumbria, and the Scottish king to retain Cumberland and Westmoreland.

1. *Crown-lands*, lands directly retained by the king, and not held by vassals in fief.

2. See pages 166 and 173.

3. *Islesmen*, from the Hebrides or Western Islands.

4. *Galloway*, the south-western part of Scotland, between the Firth of Clyde and the Solway Firth.

5. *Northallerton*, in the north of Yorkshire 27 miles north of York.

## THE CIVIL WAR.

WHEN Matilda, the daughter of King Henry, landed, England was already in terrible disorder. Not only the barons but many bishops and abbots had built strong castles, and in most cases the soldiers and followers of the feudal nobles were thieves and ruffians.

The country was now also involved in civil war—the western counties supporting Matilda, while the eastern districts were in favour of Stephen. One battle was fought before *Lincoln*; but, as Stephen's army was inferior in numbers, and some of his supporters had gone over to the enemy, he was defeated. In one old history we read that, when his army was dispersed, "he ground his teeth with anger, foamed like a wild boar, and roared like a lion, so that none durst approach him, and with double-edged axe rushed alone on the enemy; but his axe being broken and after that his sword, he was taken prisoner."

When Matilda at first landed, Stephen had allowed her to pass unmolested through his lines to join her half-brother, Robert of Gloucester, whose forces lay at Bristol.<sup>1</sup> Now, however, that he was her prisoner, she sent him to a dungeon in Bristol Castle. She herself took possession of the palace of Winchester, and of such royal treasure as still remained there.

After entering London, Matilda became worse liked than ever. She imposed a tax on the citizens as a punishment for having supported Stephen; and, if there were any of the Londoners who had called themselves her friends, her haughty and vindictive<sup>2</sup> temper now changed them into bitter foes. She even insulted Queen Maud, the wife of Stephen, who waited on her to ask for her husband's release from prison.



She had not even time to be crowned. For, one day, there was seen on the south side of the Thames a body of horse displaying the colours of Stephen's queen; immediately all the bells of London began to ring and every citizen ran to arms, "gathering in the streets like bees rushing from their hives." The unpopular Matilda had to escape imprisonment by galloping at once out of London with very few attendants.

Owing to Stephen's misrule and the civil war, the English people were brought to a state of misery such as you cannot read of in any other period of our nation's history. An eye-witness says that "multitudes left this country to wander in foreign lands, others built wretched huts in the churchyards;" and that the barons and other petty tyrants "hanged men up by the feet, and smoked them with foul smoke; they put strings about their heads, and twisted them till they went into the brain. Many thousands they afflicted with hunger. One might go a day's journey and never find a man sitting in a town; the earth bare no corn. Men said openly that Christ and His saints slept."

King Stephen being released from prison in exchange for the Earl of Gloucester, who had also been taken captive, his enemy Matilda was soon after shut up in Oxford. She had now no hope of obtaining the English crown, and knew well that, if she again fell into Stephen's power, he would not let her off so easily as he had done before.

Therefore, one dark night just before Christmas, she stole out from the besieged town with only three attendants, all of them wearing white sheets or cloaks over their clothes, so that they might not be seen easily as they walked over the snow. In this way, they passed without being observed by the sentries on guard; and following each other silently and quickly, they walked

across the snow-covered fields and over the frozen Thames. That night Queen Matilda walked more than six miles, with a wintry storm blowing in her face all the way. At length they reached Abingdon,<sup>3</sup> and the same night rode on to Wallingford,<sup>4</sup> which is about ten miles farther down the Thames. In the year 1147, weary and hopeless, she finally left England.



ESCAPE OF MATILDA.

It was not till the year 1153 that the misery of this reign came to an end. Henry, the son of Matilda, had landed in England; and an agreement was then made that Stephen should continue to reign, and that Henry should be king after him.

1. Bristol, on the Lower Avon, in Gloucester.  
2. Vindictive, revengeful.

3. Abingdon, 6 miles south of Oxford.  
4. Wallingford, 12 miles south of Oxford.

## LIFE IN NORMAN ENGLAND.

**H**OW the Normans became English.—Having read how William Duke of Normandy conquered England, and how he and his two sons and then his grandson<sup>1</sup> became kings of the country, we must now see how the change affected the English people.

Did the English, for example, learn to speak French as the Normans had done? Not at all. When an Englishman went to the king's palace or to the great courts of law, he heard nothing but French spoken; but that was not enough to make him unlearn his mother-tongue. It was the Normans who had to change *their* language and to learn English.<sup>2</sup> Englishmen of course used many Norman words, but the real language of everyday life was very little changed by the Conquest.

When the Normans came to this country there were three languages spoken in it, and at the present day we find the same three still spoken. In Wales they speak Welsh, as they did when the Conqueror landed in Sussex; in the Highlands of Scotland they still use Gaelic; but over all the rest of England and Scotland the people speak English, and no use is anywhere made of Norman-French.

So it was also with the names of the towns and villages, as well as those of the divisions of the country. The names of the shires in England and Scotland were all given to them before the Normans came, and the governor of a shire was a *shire-reeve*<sup>3</sup>—a word still preserved in the form “sheriff.” The Normans have given the word “county” for shire; but though they called a sheriff a *viscount*,<sup>4</sup> we never do so.

There were, however, many changes that were unpleasant to the English at the time ; and thousands had good reason to grumble about the treatment they received at the hands of some of the great Norman lords. From the Domesday Book we know that many of the English landholders were not deprived of their lands, and that the Normans held the estates given them by King William as English lords. Still, the new Norman masters for a long time had the best of it, and the English yeomen and others long felt the Norman rule very heavily. The people complained that the French lords had all the best land, cut down all the best forests, killed all the finest deer ; and said that England would never be England till she was rid of the Normans.

**The Norman Knights.**—The Norman kings did many things which no other kings of England were allowed to do. William the Conqueror held that all the land in England belonged to him alone, and that he only divided it out among his great lords in order that they should help him with their men in any battle which he might have to fight. Each of those nobles again, the “tenants-in-chief” as they were called, similarly divided his estate among sub-vassals and knights in order to receive their help ; and thus the whole of England was obliged to furnish an army to fight for the king. This method of holding land, on condition that the holder must serve his superior lord, formed the basis of the *Feudal*<sup>5</sup> *System*.

Under the Normans and their Feudal System, although the lords and barons were very unequal in power and importance, yet all were perfectly equal *as knights*. Any gentleman, however poor, had only to attain knight-hood, and receive his golden spurs, to be the peer of any

duke or king in Christendom. Every candidate had to undergo the same training; serving first as a page and then as an esquire to prove his manhood and courage, before attaining to the honour of knighthood.



THE CEREMONY OF KNIGHTING.

A knight generally served as esquire for about seven years before he gained his spurs. When at last the day came there was a grand procession to a church where

he had prayed and fasted; and there he took a solemn oath to be loyal to his king, to defend the Church, and to be the champion of every lady in danger or distress. Some great warrior or high-born dame buckled on his spurs, put on his steel armour and helmet, and girded his sword to his side. Then, as he knelt, a nobleman, sometimes even the king or a prince, touched him on the shoulder with the flat of a sword and dubbed<sup>6</sup> him knight. In full armour as he was, the new knight had then to vault into his saddle, and gallop to and fro in sight of his friends and the assembled crowd.

1. **Two sons and grandson**, William II., Henry I., Stephen.

2. The original language of the Normans was Scandinavian; they had adopted the dialect of Northern France, called *Langue d'Oïl*. See page 148.

3. While most of these classes of words are Saxon or English in origin, many are Celtic or Danish.

4. **Vicount**, *i.e.*, *vice-count*. The count was the

*companion of the king, the vice-count one who took the place of count. Cf. vice-president, viceroy.*

5. **Feudal**, relating to fiefs, feus, or portions of land.

6. **Dubbed**, at first meant *tapped* with the sword; then it came to mean '*named*' or '*called*', because there was then given to the kneeling applicant the *name* of knight.

## LIFE IN NORMAN ENGLAND—*continued.*

IN the reigns of William the Red King and his brother Henry, there were some curious customs. We see pictures of ladies who had sleeves so long that they must have touched the ground, unless the hands were held up. The men wore shoes with sharp points—some turning up like a serpent's tail, and others curling round like a ram's horn. It became such a fashion with the Norman noblemen and others to wear long hair that Archbishop Anselm preached against it; and we are told that a French bishop one day went about the church after sermon to clip off the long locks of King Henry and his courtiers!

The early English, as you have already read, were

given to excess in eating and drinking. The Normans were more moderate, and in fact appear to have generally had only two meals a day—dinner in the forenoon at nine o'clock, and supper in the afternoon at five o'clock. One proof of this is a common proverb which they had:—

“ To rise at five, to dine at nine,  
To sup at five, to bed at nine,  
Makes a man live to ninety-nine.”

Much improvement was made in farming during this period; and for that we must praise the monks, who introduced new modes of drainage and husbandry from France. We read also of gardens and vineyards; and one historian assures us that the wine grown in the Vale of Gloucester<sup>1</sup> “hath no disagreeable tartness in the mouth, and is very little inferior to the wines of France.”

So much armour was made during the Norman period that it led to great improvement in the working of metals. Hence we have specimens which show a great advance on the workmanship of previous times. One of the popes, at the close of the Norman period, was an Englishman<sup>2</sup> who had been born near St. Albans;<sup>3</sup> and we read that when the abbot there sent him two candlesticks made of gold and silver, Pope Adrian<sup>4</sup> declared in his letter of thanks that he had never seen workmanship so beautiful. The historian also tells us that the same abbot of St. Albans had a golden cup made, “which was adorned with flowers and foliage most delicately worked, and most elegantly set round with precious stones.”

Nobody can read the history of William the Conqueror and his successors without seeing that the Normans were eagerly fond of hunting. This fondness was

such a passion (as we have seen), that it led to cruel laws against the liberties of the people. And any man, whether English or Norman, found hunting the king's deer, was condemned to lose life or limb; and if any dog



A LADY HAWKING.

was taken in the royal forests, it had one or more claws cut off, unless it were redeemed by the owner.

Hunting with hawks and falcons was still a favourite pastime in England, as it had long been before the landing of the Norman Duke. So fond had King Harold been of this pursuit, that some say his last journey to



Normandy was to recover a favourite falcon which had flown in that direction from the south coast. On the famous Bayeux Tapestry,<sup>5</sup> moreover, one can see that Harold carries a falcon on his wrist when visiting his Norman rival's court.

The chief amusement of military men in feudal times was the *tournament*; but neither William the Conqueror



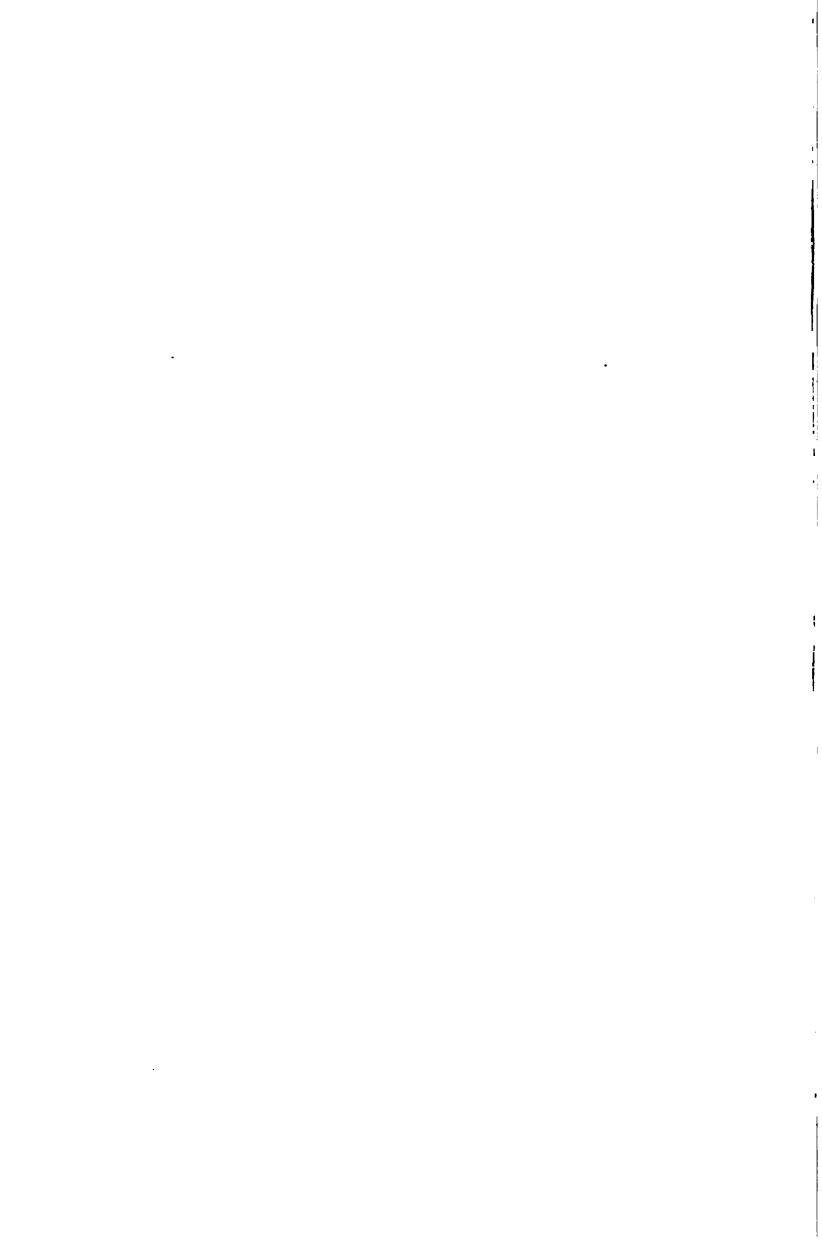
A TOURNAMENT.

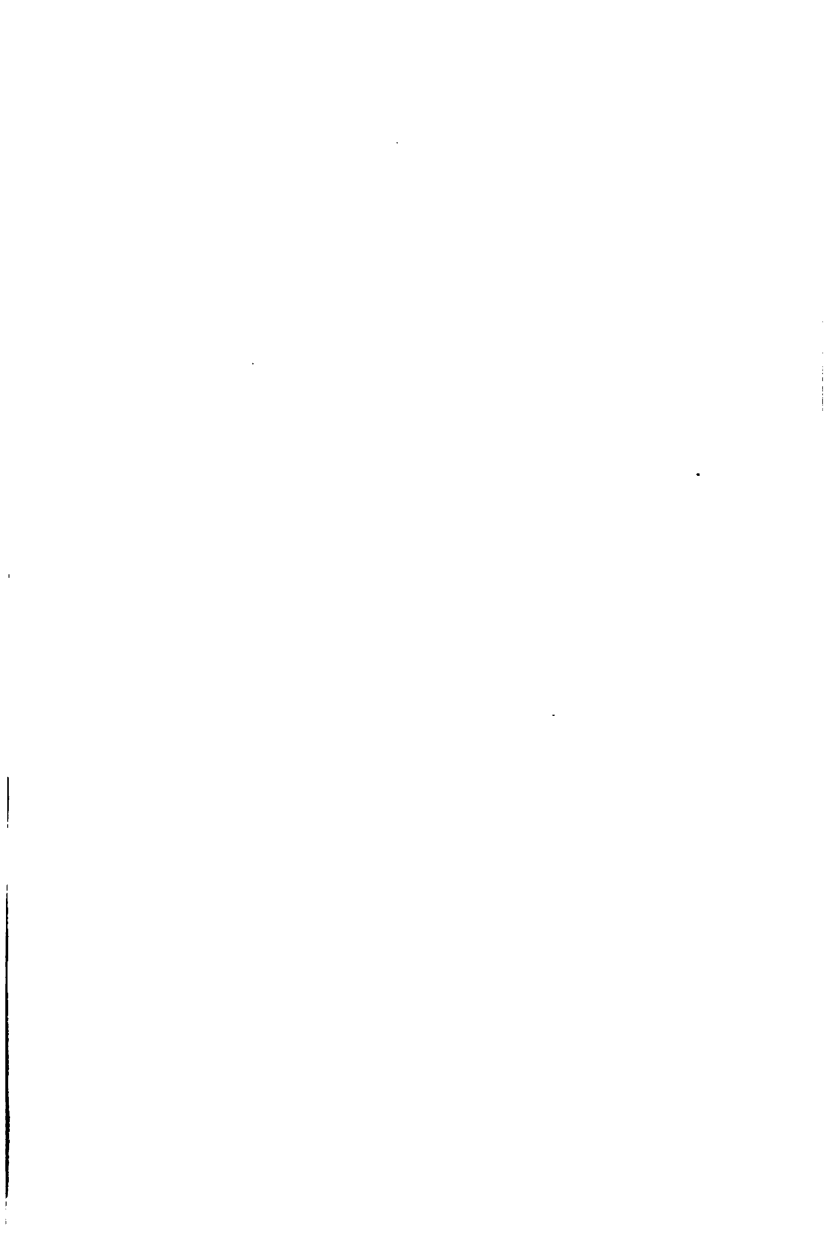
nor his immediate successors allowed this famous spectacle. Indeed, it was not till the end of the twelfth century that tournaments became really important in England,

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| <p>1. <b>Gloucester</b>, a cathedral city on the left bank of the Severn.</p> <p>2. Nicholas Breakspear, pope in 1154. He was a Saxon, and his election indicated that the English race were recovering from the effects of the Conquest.</p> <p>3. <b>St. Alban's</b>, in Hertford, near the Colne, about 12 miles west of the county town. It stands on the <i>short</i> river Ver. Cf. the old name Verulamium.</p> | <p>4. <b>Adrian</b>, it is usual for the newly-elected pope to change his name; thus Nicholas Breakspear became Pope Adrian IV.</p> <p>5. <b>Bayeux Tapestry</b>, a representation in embroidery of the Norman Conquest. It is supposed to have been worked by Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, and was by her presented to the cathedral of Bayeux. Bayeux is in Normandy, about 20 miles west of Caen.</p> |
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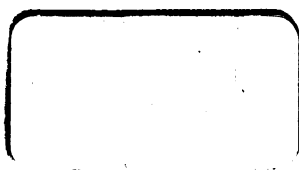








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1. The first part of the report is a general overview of the project.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the methodology.

3. The third part of the report is a discussion of the results.

4. The fourth part of the report is a conclusion.

5. The fifth part of the report is a list of references.

6. The sixth part of the report is a list of appendices.

7. The seventh part of the report is a list of figures.

8. The eighth part of the report is a list of tables.

9. The ninth part of the report is a list of footnotes.

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